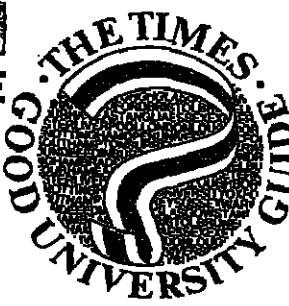


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OUR DEFINITIVE LEAGUE TABLE
All you need to know about where to apply
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Hidden danger in a sandwich
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Jean Alesi told to keep his hands on the wheel **PAGE 3**



TOMORROW
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Olympic diving coach suspended after sex assault claims



Edge: unavailable for Atlanta Olympic Games

By CRAIG LORD, CAROL MIDGLEY AND PAUL WILKINSON

THE British Olympic diving coach has been suspended after being arrested and questioned by child protection officers over allegations of indecent assault.

Mike Edge, 45, was arrested in Sheffield, where he works as the diving development officer, on April 24. He has told the Amateur Swimming Federation of Great Britain he will not be available for selection for the Olympic Games in Atlanta this year. It would have been his fourth Olympics as a national coach.

Lyndsey Fraser, 34, a former

national diving champion who competed at the 1984 Olympics, was arrested on the same day at Crystal Palace, south London, and interviewed by members of the child protection unit from Borehamwood, Hertfordshire. Both are understood to "utterly refute" the accusations, which relate to alleged offences in the 1980s.

The arrests were confirmed as it emerged that the Amateur Swimming Federation will launch a national computer database of up to 50,000 swimming and diving coaches, teachers and club helpers in the autumn in an attempt to weed out suspected child abusers. The move

comes a year after Paul Hickson, the former Olympic swimming coach, was jailed for 17 years for raping and assaulting 11 girls in his charge.

Mr Edge has been temporarily suspended as the team coach for England and Great Britain by the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA).

David Sparkes, the chief executive of the association, said in a statement: "The ASA is deeply concerned about the police investigations into allegations made against Mike Edge, as it is in all cases concerning abuse or harassment. It is a matter of great seriousness and the ASA fully supports the process of law in these

instances. In accordance with the ASA's own strict guidelines, Mike Edge has been temporarily suspended from his duties as a team coach for both England and Great Britain until the matter has been fully resolved."

Mr Sparkes emphasised that it was very important "not to presuppose the guilt or otherwise of either of these two people" pending police investigations.

Last night Mr Edge was suspended from his post as diving development officer at the Pond's Forge swimming complex in Sheffield, where the national team often trains.

However, Ms Fraser was still coaching at Highgate Diving Club in

north London, where she trains children from the age of ten. Jim McNally, the president of the club, said: "When it comes to this case we believe in the premise of law — that you are innocent until proven guilty. We would support the alleged victims and all the alleged offenders. She will not be going away on trips with children, nor will she be alone with the children on the poolside. There will be other adult coaches there."

Brian Spiro, Mr Edge's solicitor, said yesterday: "My client has not yet been charged with any offence and the allegations are entirely refuted. We do not wish to make any further comment for the time being."



Fraser: coaches children at north London club

Labour plans tough line on teenage crime

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

YOUNG offenders could face a "three strikes and you're out" approach to crime under Labour, which plans to bring persistent teenage lawbreakers before the courts more quickly.

Labour leaders want to end the trend of repeat cautioning, which they say has led teenagers to assume that no action will be taken even if they commit a series of petty offences. A Labour government would expect police to be brought to court any juvenile committing a third minor offence.

Labour believes that allowing juveniles to remain unpunished when they first offend sows the seeds for habitual offending in later life. But some young people have been cautioned up to six times for vandalism, graffiti and shoplifting before facing court.

Now Jack Straw, the Shadow Home Secretary, is to announce plans to tighten Michael Howard's guidelines urging police forces to cut the number of juvenile cautions, which have risen steadily to a peak of 124,700 in 1994. But while advocating a

tougher line against those committing a third offence, Labour is pressing for second-time offenders to be given a "super caution" which will involve extensive interviews and advice sessions with social workers, teachers or other local community leaders.

Although a similar system has been taken up voluntarily by some forces, the Association of Chief Police Officers has criticised the fact that it is used inconsistently.

Labour's home affairs team points to high levels of success in some city areas where young offenders have been encouraged to take part in social and sporting activities, and it also claims that the "caution plus" scheme leads to closer contacts between police and other agencies that can bring substantial longer term savings in crime prevention.

Senior figures are concerned that police forces are backing away from prosecuting young offenders because of the amount of work involved, and they believe that only the firm presumption that a third offence will lead to

a court appearance will produce tough action right across the country. However, the party is understood to be reluctant to make such a policy compulsory as it believes there must be room for leniency in exceptional cases.

Labour's attempts to address high levels of juvenile crime come in the wake of a package of proposals announced by Mr Straw last year, under which young offenders would have to carry out community work, sometimes on behalf of their victims. Mr Straw told last year's party conference that swifter action was needed to stop teenagers becoming habitual offenders by the age of 17.

Mr Howard has already pressed police forces to veer away from repeat cautions and prosecute persistent offenders, but the response is said to have been patchy. The Police Federation has also criticised the amount of repeat cautioning as bringing the police service "into disrepute" and suggested that many young people equated a caution with being "let off".



Freed Dutch hostage Martha Klein, who is seven months pregnant, is helped from a helicopter on her way to hospital in Jakarta yesterday

Jungle hostage saw fellow captives hacked to death

By ANDREW DRUMMOND IN JAKARTA AND BILL FROST

A YOUNG British hostage watched helplessly as two fellow captives were killed by Papuan rebels when special forces attacked their jungle base, it was disclosed last night.

Anna Melvor was then left alone in the forest as the rebels, who had attacked the two Indonesians pair with machetes and a poison arrow, dragged their victims away and abandoned them to bleed to death.

Miss Melvor, a 21-year-old Cambridge graduate, and the two Indonesians had become separated from eight other hostages, who were freed soon after troops launched their attack on the rebel camp on a mountain ridge in the Irian Jaya jungle. She was rescued only after hours of fighting between the soldiers and the kidnapers that ended with two of the 20 rebels being shot dead and another two cap-

tured. Four others had been killed earlier in the five-day operation to free the hostages, who had been held prisoner since January.

Last night all nine hostages — four Cambridge graduates, two Dutch nationals, one of them seven months pregnant, and three Indonesians — were in hospital in Jakarta. They were all thin and bewildered, but only three needed intensive care; the others were said just to need a good rest.

Ms Melvor telephoned her family in Bournemouth to say that she was none the worse physically for her ordeal. Her mother, Susan, said that she sounded "absolutely amazing", but added: "This was not the right time to talk about what they had been through."

Daniel Start also rang his family in West Sussex to reassure them. His stepmother, Jan, said his first question

was about the English spring. "He wanted to know if he had missed the bluebells. He was thrilled when I told him that the spring was late and they weren't all out yet — if he hurried home to Midhurst, he would still see them."

She added: "Daniel sounded composed and calm at first — happy to be free. But there was great sadness, too, over the two Indonesian hostages killed when the special forces went in. They were his friends and we were all crying. I think Daniel is in a state of shock at what happened."

Mr Start also told his family of the hostages' fear that they might never escape the jungle of Irian Jaya, for whose independence the kidnapers were fighting. "He said that because of the nature of the terrain, only James Bond could free them, they were beginning to lose hope when

Continued on page 2, col 5

Cambridge on top for fourth year

By JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR

CAMBRIDGE University retains a slim lead over Oxford in this year's Times university rankings, published today.

The light blues have headed the league table since The Times Good University Guide was first published four years ago. Edinburgh, the top university in Scotland over the same period, has been joined by Oxford Brookes and Kingston in the table, intended as a signpost for students considering a first degree, giving a broad indication of a university's standing.

Welcoming the news, Dr Robert Smith, Kingston's vice-chancellor, said the quality of his university had been underlined in official ratings. Only five points out of a

thousand separate Cambridge from Oxford, partly because of the changes in methodology. Oxford suffered previously for the variety of higher degrees among its staff when the proportion of PhDs alone was used as a measure of academic qualifications.

Sir David Williams, Cambridge's vice-chancellor, said: "I am pleased — for my colleagues, for the student body and for the technical and secretarial staff. It is easy to approve of surveys such as this when one does well, but The Times in this annual exercise offers a valuable and well-directed service to all those interested in higher education in the UK."

Good University Guide, pages 34, 35

Ban on 'Jerusalem' puts memorial service in a jam

By JOANNA BALE

ONE of England's best-loved hymns, Jerusalem, is at the centre of a row between leading clergy.

The classic hymn, based on William Blake's poem and sung by generations of schoolchildren, last night concert promenaders and Women's Institute members, smacks of privilege, according to Canon Donald Gray, the Speaker's chaplain at St Margaret's,

Westminster. As reported in the Times Diary yesterday, Canon Gray told peers organising next month's memorial service for Baroness Faithfull that Jerusalem was not acceptable. He objects to the reference to "dark satanic mills", which he believes represents the Church's neglect of the inner cities.

Canon Gray, who leads MPs at prayer, said yesterday: "The object of too much of our economic and social policy has been to derive as much

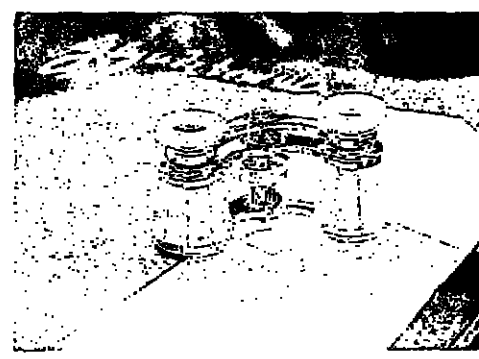
wealth as we can out of the industrial and commercial areas, in order that we can enjoy the delights of the country ... We must build a new Jerusalem, not just in the fields and pastures, but in the cities and towns."

The Church of Scotland recently excluded Jerusalem from its new hymnbook on the ground that it was not suitable for the present age.

The Rev John Broadhurst, soon to be the new Bishop of Fulham, criticised

Canon Gray. "It is an English legend put to music," he said. "When I think how many modern hymns there are that are not really Christian-based, it seems strange to pick on a hymn that so many people love."

The Rev Michael Garland, secretary of the Hymn Society, said: "It is a splendid tune and has been sung on national occasions. It seems anything goes at funerals now so it would be rather churlish to refuse Jerusalem."



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CARDINGTON OPERA	20 June-14 July
WINDSOR TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS	24 June-7 July
ROUND THE ISLAND RACE, ISLE OF WIGHT	29 June
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Polite revolution didn't hurt, didn't work — didn't last

Yesterday, Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Minister, and Peter Lilley, Secretary of State for Social Security, slept together. On the Front Bench.

It did not last long: the short period during which Mr Lilley closed his eyes and rested his head overlapped only briefly with the momentary lapse during which Mr Hogg became comatose. But there was a spell — it occurred around 3.20pm — when both seemed to be asleep.

Appearances can be deceptive and we do best to assume that both were finding the TV

lights a little too bright. But anyone who did drop off at Prime Minister's Questions yesterday could be forgiven. It was staggeringly dull. It was the beginning of Tony Blair's much-trumpeted campaign to make PM's Questions more polite. It was also the end of his campaign. How do we know this? Because, though Mr Blair started courteously, he managed to keep it up for only two questions, then lost control and blew it on his third. We were back where we started, in the school playground. At this point the session picked up. The "Polite



MATTHEW PARRIS
POLITICAL SKETCH

Revolution" (as it may come to be known) had lasted all of four minutes.

Tim Rathbone (C, Lewes) ushered in the revolution at 3.17 with a question of mind-blowing courtesy and goodwill in which he put not one but two high-minded inquiries to the Prime Minister. Did Mr Major share his admiration for the "tackling drugs together" campaign? Would Mr

Major accept his thanks for his "involvement with young people last Tuesday" to pursue that campaign?

Tough questions indeed, but Rathbone was merciless: "And will my Rt hon friend join me in welcoming yesterday's fall in unemployment?" Mr Major bit the bullet, grasped the nettle, took the bull by the horns, and replied Yes to all three questions.

A very constructive start. Everybody yawned. Then Mr Blair rose. "Whilst appreciating the Government's difficulties," he began, and launched into a deeply helpful and learned question about the BSE culling programme. By way of reply Mr Major offered a thoughtful dissertation on tallow, gelatine and semen. This was appalling. How long could it go on? Parliamentary sketchwriters stared reduncancy in the face. Blair attempted a second question, equally constructive: would the PM "redouble his efforts" to sort out problems

with abattoirs? Indeed he would. In a riveting riposte, from which the phrase "carcasses cannot be put into cold storage until they are at least partly rendered" stands out as the most rivetting, Major checkmated Blair's courtesy with courtesy of his own, and leered at him, like a Teacher's Pet in class, seeing off a rival.

Blair flipped. "Of course some would say it did hurt and it hasn't worked," he snapped. Phew! Polite Revolution over. Mr Blair looked at his shoes, ashamed.

Madam Speaker was so cross she cut off the next

questioner, John Townend (C, Bridlington) in mid-flow. Earlier she had even silenced the Chief Secretary, William Waldegrave. Spending all this time with the Queen and President Chirac recently seems to have emboldened her. Why, only that morning they had named a new rose "Madam Speaker" after her.

But when will they name the "Prime Minister" rose? Hardy (though prey to a variety of pests), this rose can disappoint gardeners seeking a colourful show, but blooms unexpectedly at General Elections.

Howard attacks European Court

The Home Secretary will today launch one of the fiercest attacks by a senior government minister on the European Court of Justice. With the Government considering new proposals for reforming the court to put before the inter-governmental conference on the future of Europe, Michael Howard will accuse the court of "adopting its own political agenda" and acting beyond the treaties. He will tell a European Research Group conference of lawyers and parliamentarians of "growing concern" at the way the court is operating.

Treatment ended

Doctors at Law Hospital in Lanarkshire withdrew treatment from Janet Johnston, 53, who is at the centre of Scotland's first right-to-die case. They had been advised by their solicitors that there was no legal challenge to a ruling last month in the Court of Session in Edinburgh.

Jail bomb found

A bomb was defused at the top-security Maghaberry Prison in Co Antrim yesterday. The bomb, which was under a car in the visitors' car park, is believed to have been part of a feud between factions in the Irish Republican Liberation Army. Visits to the jail were cancelled until the device was made safe.

Divorce threat

The Government must face defeat over its contentious divorce Bill despite having agreed to a series of embarrassing concessions. As the committee stage of the Family Law Bill came to a close last night, right-wing Tories and Labour MPs made clear they would try to kill it during third reading next month.

Pupil dead

A pupil at the independent King's School, Worcester, has been found dead shortly before he was due to sit his A-level examinations. Matthew Surman, 18, was found dead at the weekend in a family home in Droitwich. Matthew started attending King's almost eleven years.

Wild boar hunt

A wild boar that escaped from a farm near Dunbar, Lothian, was still on the run last night. Police put up posters warning the public to stay away from Pumba, which may have been injured in a scuffle with two lurchers. The animal's owner, Garth Bell, said it was unlikely to attack anyone.

New dinosaur

The remains of an African dinosaur as large as *Tyrannosaurus rex* have been found in Morocco, with those of a smaller but fleet-footed cousin. They were found in the Ken Ken region. The smaller dinosaur is entirely new and has been named *Deinodromus agilis* (agile delta runner).

Teacher criticised for secret filming

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN
MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

SCHOOL governors in Greater Manchester launched an investigation yesterday into the actions of a teacher who secretly filmed scenes for a television documentary about classroom violence.

Glenys Reeds, chairwoman of governors at Stamford County High School in Ash-ton-under-Lyme, accused Gill Taylor, a drama teacher, of selfishly blackening the good name of the school by agreeing to take part in an undercover operation with Channel 4 to film the worst excesses in discipline.

The *Despatches* programme, broadcast on Wednesday, did not name the school, but revealed severe discipline problems. Pupils were shown insulting Ms Taylor in front of the hidden camera as she tried to reprimand them. It also showed a booby trap of broken glass being placed in her desk drawer and told of pupils carrying weapons and teachers being assaulted.

Mrs Reeds said: "She has given no thought or consideration to the consequences of her actions which will affect the pupils, of whom the vast majority are hard working



Gill Taylor, who filmed her unruly pupils with a concealed camera for a television documentary

and well-behaved, as well as her own colleagues."

Ms Taylor, who was on sick leave yesterday, said she had received messages of support from other teachers. "I realise that what I did could jeopardise my career and that I might be blacklisted for teaching jobs, but I feel that what I did was right. After the killing of Philip Lawrence, I felt I had to act," she said.

Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Asso-

ciation of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers, said that the programme confirmed everything the union had been saying about classroom violence, although the use of hidden cameras would make other teachers feel betrayed.

A spokesman for Tameside council said that the programme gave a distorted picture of the school, where most pupils were lively, keen, and hard-working.

Tories threaten to resign whip over Sinn Fein talks

BY ARTHUR LEATHLEY AND NICHOLAS WATT

TORY MPs threatened last night to resign the party whip if John Major allows all-party Northern Ireland talks to go ahead without any agreement over the decommissioning of terrorist weapons.

Conservative backbenchers were infuriated by Mr Major's suggestion, in yesterday's *Irish Times*, that the issue should not block the all-party talks set to begin next month. They claimed that such a move would allow Sinn Fein to take part in talks without the need for any agreement over the surrender of weapons.

Mr Major is also facing increasing pressure among Cabinet colleagues who have voiced fears that Unionist concerns are being ignored in an attempt to draw Sinn Fein into the talks. Viscount Cranborne, the Leader of the House of Lords and one of the most prominent Tory Unionists, has been backed in his concerns by several Cabinet colleagues, including Michael Howard and Peter Lilley.

The Prime Minister wrote that agreement had to be reached on how "decommissioning can be taken forward without blocking the negotiations". His words were immediately interpreted by Sinn Fein and the Irish Government as a move towards

Dublin's call for separate talks on the destruction of weapons, allowing the main negotiations to continue.

Gerry Adams, the Sinn Fein president, welcomed this section of the article and asked for clarification of the Prime Minister's thinking, an indication that Sinn Fein is encouraged by the tone of the remarks. Mr Adams said: "I agree with [Mr Major], and Sinn Fein has said for some time that this issue must not block the negotiations." Mr Adams criticised Mr Major for failing to spell out in detail how he hoped to resolve the deadlock on decommissioning, saying Mr Major had stated his aspiration on decommissioning but had failed "to move forward to work out or put forward propositions about how this could be brought about".

Although Downing Street made clear that Britain was not accepting Dublin's proposal for totally separate discussions on weapons, Unionists on the Tory backbenches were alarmed by Mr Major's stance. They claimed that the Government had moved too far from its original demand for a commitment that arms be decommissioned in advance of talks and said that Mr Major was allowing Sinn Fein to dictate



Cranborne, concerned by colleagues

the timing of terrorist arms being given up.

One senior pro-Unionist Tory said: "We have had enough of this. I and one or two colleagues are seriously considering resigning the whip if the Government persists with this."

Another Tory backbencher said: "We have given the Prime Minister the benefit of the doubt for many months even though we have had severe reservations. We are no longer confident that he has control, or even influence, over the direction of these talks. Everything is being handed to Sinn Fein to make the running." Downing Street rejected the

suggestion from Dick Spring, the Irish Deputy Prime Minister, that a fourth strand of separate talks on weapons destruction should be held from the three-stranded main talks. "We do not see a separate stream for these decommissioning talks."

Officials played down suggestions that Mr Major's article was aimed at winning over nationalists ahead of the June 10 talks. "We have said many times that decommissioning must be addressed at the start of all-party talks." Senior officials said that parallel decommissioning had been addressed in the Mitchell report.

Mr Adams refused to say whether the Prime Minister's comments had improved the chances of another IRA truce being declared. The Sinn Fein president said he would not be "dashing off" to call on the IRA to restore its ceasefire in the light of Mr Major's article. He added: "I want to go to the IRA on the basis that I am going to succeed."

Dublin seized on Mr Major's article to renew its pressure on the IRA to restore its ceasefire. John Bruton, the Irish Prime Minister, who has been pressing Britain to address Sinn Fein's concerns, said the IRA should act because Mr Major had showed that he was deeply committed to the talks.

Rethink urged on £500m millennium exhibition

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

THE Millennium Commission is under intense government pressure to scale down its plans for a £500 million exhibition in Greenwich.

Ministerial concern that private companies are unwilling to provide the sponsorship of up to £300 million needed to match a proposed lottery grant of £200 million has forced the commission to reconsider its scheme. It was planning a year-long event modelled on the Festival of Britain in 1951.

Yesterday Sir Peter Levene, efficiency adviser to the Prime Minister, presented the commission with a report on the scheme's commercial prospects. It is understood that he suggested a smaller exhibition at about half the cost.

A source said: "There are

people who think that the commission originally over-egged the size of the exhibition. One solution would be for the Commission to put up around £100 million, instead of the proposed £200 million, and for the private sector to bankroll a further £100 million. That would be easier to raise, would still be enough to fund a fairly impressive show and might be better for Greenwich in the long term because it would be more easier to sustain in the long term."

Another option being considered is the creation of a government scheme to underwrite the private sector investment in the exhibition. A spokesman for the Greenwich Millennium Trust, one of the exhibition's backers, said companies were reluctant to come

forward unless they were guaranteed a proper return.

Companies that originally expressed interest in supporting the exhibition include British Airways, BT and the British Airports Authority. The difficulty in persuading sponsors to commit themselves is a severe blow to the Government, which hoped that the exhibition would be a big tourist attraction and a showcase for British commerce and industry.

Scrapping the exhibition or staging it in Birmingham, which competed with Greenwich for the contract, would embarrass the commission. "We have come so far down the road on this that there is no turning back now," a spokesman for the Greenwich Millennium Trust said.

Jungle hostage

Continued from page 1

the special forces launched their assault." Mrs Start said. Annette van der Kolk's parents described their conversation with their daughter as "short and harrowing". Her father, Maarten, said from his home in Fleet, Hampshire: "Certainly they are all being very brave about what happened. But they are pretty upset and we have to be careful. We are immensely distressed too. Our happiness has been marred by the death of their two companions."

Mr van der Kolk predicted that the freed hostages would want to stay in Indonesia for the funerals of their friends. "We don't expect them home for a few days yet."

As the hostages recovered in hospital, the Indonesian armed forces chief of staff gave more details of the operation to end their 139-day ordeal. Lieutenant General Soeyono said that his troops had found the rebels' hideout using heat-seeking equipment and tracker dogs. The first signals were spotted by a pilotless drone equipped with thermal detectors.

Then, just before dawn on Wednesday, the dogs picked up the scent of blood and the medication being used by the pregnant hostage, Martha Klein. "The main hostage group was isolated early on and we were able to free them

quickly," the general said. "But fighting continued from 7am through to 3.30pm. It was not continuous fighting. It was fighting on the run, covering an area several kilometres in distance."

As our troops chased after the terrorists, they came across Anna McVoy, who they had taken with them, but whom they had been forced to abandon. Anna and the two Indonesians had become separated from the others when the Free Papua Movement kidnappers suddenly turned on the Indonesians.

General Soeyono said one was attacked with an axe in the back and the other was hit with a poisoned arrow. "They did not die immediately but were dragged away by the OPM. Anna was left in the forest alone. It must have been awful for her."

Six of the 20 rebels had guns; the rest were armed with an assortment of weapons. 100 special forces, regular soldiers and police were involved. Brigadier General Prabowo Subianto, the special forces commander, said: "Two rebels were shot in the battle. Six others had been killed in the course of the previous five days of operations." The dead have yet to be identified, so it is not known if they include the rebel leaders Kelly Kwalik and Daniel Kogoya.

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BY ANDREW

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Rape victim
testifies a
second time

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BY GILLIAN BOWEN

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Three children get leukaemia in town with polluted water

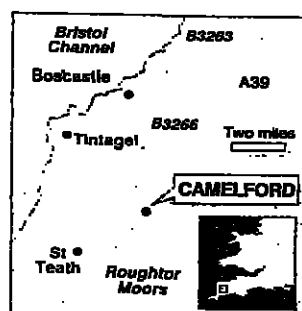
By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

THREE children in the same class at a school in Camelford, north Cornwall, have contracted leukaemia. But Dr David Miles, director of public health for Cornwall, dismissed fears yesterday that the cases were linked with an accident which contaminated the town's drinking water with aluminium sulphate and affected 20,000 people in 1988.

The two boys, one of whom died in January, and a girl were all aged about 14, and pupils at Sir James Smith's Community School. The surviving children are being treated for the disease and are said to be doing well.

"Water poisoning is extremely unlikely because the chemicals in the water episode were inorganic," Dr Miles said. "Where chemicals have been associated with causes of cancer they tend to be organic. Therefore at this stage we think it is unlikely."

He is seeking expert advice from the Department of Health on this and other aspects of clusters of specific diseases. Nothing was being ruled out, he said, adding that it was "remarkably unusual" to have three cases in the same tutor group at the same



school. Before this cluster, the last recorded case from Camelford had been in 1984. Normally, Dr Miles said, only between three and nine cases of leukaemia would occur each year in children aged up to 16 in the whole health authority area.

Dr Miles said that all three children, who have been diagnosed with different types of leukaemia, had been living in Camelford at the time of the water pollution incident. "I am not confident we will get to the bottom of this. Causes of leukaemia are many, and in most cases it is not possible to determine the exact cause or group of causes."

The possibility that the leukaemias may have been caused by the radioactive gas

radon, or by high-voltage electricity cables, will also be checked by scientists.

The school's head teacher, Angela Perlmutter, said a health authority helpline would be open to answer inquiries from parents. In a letter to parents she said they should not fear that their children were at risk because leukaemia was not contagious.

Paul Tyler, MP for North Cornwall, said that the three cases were "a remarkable coincidence". He reiterated his calls for a public inquiry into the pollution incident. Local people have complained of poor health ever since.

Leukaemia clusters have been observed in many places before. Several have been seen around nuclear power stations, leading to claims that they are caused by radiation. Others have no connection to nuclear power, and many theories have been advanced to explain them.

Among the most persuasive is the suggestion that childhood leukaemia may indeed be caused by an infective agent, so far unidentified. Leukaemia in cats is caused by a virus.

According to this theory, the disease emerges in clusters when there are population movements which bring vulnerable and immune communities into contact. There seems, however, no special reason why this should apply to Camelford.

The Leukaemia Research Fund said it was extremely rare for several leukaemia cases to occur in the same place, at the same time and in the same age group. A spokesman said: "Indeed it is possibly unique in the UK. It is very important to carry out a careful study to determine whether there are any common factors among the affected children."

Two of the cases were acute lymphoblastic leukaemia and the third acute myeloid leukaemia. "There is little, if any, evidence to suggest that these two different forms have the same underlying causes," the spokesman said.

13 counties may be at risk from radon gas

By ANDREW PIERCE, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

A FURTHER 100,000 households could be exposed to radon gas, one of the biggest causes of lung cancer, the Department of Environment confirmed yesterday.

The new zones, which had previously been thought to be free from risk, are highlighted on a map published by the National Radiological Protection Board. They include parts of Somerset, Cumbria, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northumberland, North Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire and Wiltshire.

Householders will be invited by the board to take part

in a free test to identify whether their home is affected. Remedial measures will cost up to £800 and include sealing floors and improving airflow under houses.

In each area more than 1 per cent of homes is expected to be above the Government's action level for radon. In some areas, up to 30 per cent of homes are thought to be affected. The gas, produced by the decay of natural uranium, disperses quickly in open air but can accumulate in buildings.

The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health yesterday accused the Government of ignoring warnings.



Love in the fast lane: Benetton has decided Kumiko and Alesi must leave their romance in the shade

F1 team bans pitstop passion to stop lover driving Alesi round the bend

FROM OLIVER HOLT IN MONTE CARLO

FAST cars and women have always been a feature of the Monaco grand prix, the showpiece of the Formula One season, but this year one team has slammed the brakes on the one to help speed up the other. Jean Alesi, the dashing Frenchman who was hired last year by the Benetton team to replace the world champion, Michael Schumacher, is having a hard time earning his £4 million this season. Five races have come and gone without him living up to expectations — and his team has decided something must be done.

Benetton admit their driver has been encouraged to banish all "distractions" at grands prix, and chief among these is, it seems, his girlfriend, Kumiko Goto, a Japanese actress famed in her homeland. The Benetton team deny it, but it is understood that she has been banned from the race-track. Kumiko, once a fixture, was absent from the San Marino grand prix a fortnight ago and has not

been seen here so far. The rumours suggest she has been banned for three races, which means she will miss the Spanish grand prix at the end of the month, too.

Not that she will be the first female exile from the pit lane. In 1992, Jordan was forced to ban the wife of Stefano Modena from circuits because she had taken to calling her own press conferences.

In 1994, Sandy Andretti, the wife of the American driver, Michael Andretti, caused consternation among the McLaren team by donning a headset and talking to her husband while he was still out on the track. She was asking, apparently, where they were going for dinner that night.

More recently, Pedro Diniz, the Ligier driver, is thought to have suggested himself that his girlfriend stay away from races at the end of last season because of her fondness for another driver. She has been reprieved now, though.

Ian Phillips, the commercial director at Jordan, a team famed for its liberal, laid-

back approach, said that clauses about the attendance of wives and girlfriends were often written into drivers' contracts. "We have done agreements saying no girlfriend until the day of the race," he said. "Mostly, though, we leave it up to them."

Damon Hill's wife, Georgie, one of the most articulate of the current crop of drivers' wives, comes to only three or four races a year so that their children are not left alone too often. The behaviour of partners, she says, depends on the requirements of their husbands or boyfriends. "Some want you to be right there all the time," she said. "Some seem to want to know you're around if they want you and others just say stay away completely until all their work is done."

Damon is very happy for me to be at the circuit. I always make sure he knows where I am so he can find me if he needs to. Being there is most important at the end of the day so he can have someone to talk to that he trusts. How do I avoid being a distraction? I try to keep my bra on at all times.

Museums chief may face quiz on medals

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

THE DIRECTOR of the National Galleries of Scotland has been criticised for his decision to sell his personal collection of Renaissance and baroque bronzes and medals.

Timothy Clifford, head of the galleries since 1984, planned to sell the collection of 597 medals anonymously to alleviate financial difficulties. But, because it was one of the largest collections to come onto the market for a long time, his identity leaked out.

Tristram Besterman, convenor of the Museums' Association ethics committee, said the sale was to be discussed at the committee's next meeting. He said he had spoken briefly to Mr Clifford.

"I'd rather he hadn't done this and I'm not happy about it but it is a grey area," he said. "It may be that he has not breached the rules. He informed his institution and sought their permission. They told him it was all right as long as he sold anonymously and therefore was not trading on his name."

The ethical code of the association states that no member of the museum profession should "deal in material covered by the institution's collecting policy". The professional should be aware that such dealing might affect other institutions and is best avoided altogether.

The National Gallery of Scotland has built up a collection of Renaissance commemorative medals under Mr Clifford's directorship in the past ten years. A spokesman for the gallery said: "The matter is a private one. The Gallery will not be bidding for the medals as that would constitute a conflict of interest."

Mr Clifford said he was being forced to sell for financial reasons and denied there was any conflict of interest. He is not selling anything he has acquired since he has been director and is planning to donate several of his medals to the museum. The collection, which is expected to fetch between £250,000 and £300,000 when it is auctioned by Spink and Son in London on Tuesday, was advertised as "the property of a gentleman".

Rape victim testifies a second time

A VICTIM of a convicted rapist who gave evidence against him 11 years ago returned to court for a case with what the prosecution called "echoes of similarity".

A jury at Maidstone Crown Court had decided that John Blackman, 49, abducted a 19-year-old girl and subjected her to a three-day attack at his flat in Deptford, southeast London.

The judge allowed the jury to hear evidence from the woman he abducted and raped in 1985. Blackman admitted that attack and was jailed by Leicester Crown Court for nine years.

In the present case, Blackman met the girl in a pub in January last year. She told the court: "I couldn't escape. He was beside me all the time. I was scared, felt sick and shaking. Every time I said no, he hit me."

She escaped by convincing him that she would return to live with him and he agreed to drive her home to Margate, Kent. When she got home she found that her mother had reported her missing.

Blackman was found guilty of six charges of rape, one of attempted rape, false imprisonment and indecent assault. Sentencing was adjourned until June 28 for medical, psychiatric and pre-sentence reports.

Film-maker strikes back in £1.3bn Star Wars deal

By DALYA ALBERGE, ARTS CORRESPONDENT, AT THE CANNES FILM FESTIVAL

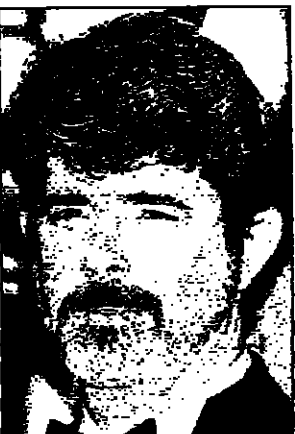
GEORGE LUCAS, the man behind the *Star Wars* film trilogy, is to make three more of the science-fiction epics, aimed at fans from a new teenage generation, after clinching the biggest deal in cinema history.

Lucas, writer-director of *Star Wars* (1977), *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980) and *Return of the Jedi* (1983), has agreed the \$2 billion (£1.3 billion) contract with the makers of Pepsi. It has been rumoured that he is keen for Kenneth Branagh to step into Sir Alec Guinness's shoes as the Jedi knight, Obi-wan Kenobi.

The Pepsi deal, which includes space-adventure merchandising, made jaws drop even at seen-it-all Cannes. Pepsi, which recently changed the livery of its cola cans to blue, presumably sees the deal with Lucasfilm as another way of appealing to teenage Pepsi drinkers.

The *Star Wars* films have developed a cult following among the young. The videos were top-ten hits all last year, with 1.5 million copies sold in the run-up to Christmas.

Video games, and spin-off books and toys, have fed the *Star Wars* mania. Last November, Nintendo announced that it was releasing a video



Lucas: biggest deal in cinema history

game called *Shadows Of The Empire*: players pit their wits against the *Star Wars* characters.

The films that Lucas is to make with Pepsi will tell the story before his original *Star Wars* films — which are themselves to be given digitally remastered soundtracks and enhanced visual effects and returned to the big screen.

The success of the original *Star Wars* epic surprised even 20th Century Fox, which handed Lucas a \$11.5 million budget after his pitch had been rejected by every studio:

audiences for science fiction had been thought to be limited. Spectacular special effects — laser duels, exploding planets and spaceship skirmishes — catapulted the film to success. Tongue-in-cheek humour and Harrison Ford helped.

Roger A. Enrico, chief executive of PepsiCo, said: "Lucasfilm has and will continue to change the way movies are made, and this partnership will forever change the way movies are marketed." This would allow them "to truly connect with virtually every consumer in the world". Maybe soon in outer space, too.

News that cinema's biggest blockbusters will be made in the United States came as "a great disappointment" to Sir Sydney Samuelson, commissioner of the British Film Commission. The original *Star Wars* pictures were made at Ealing.

However, Sir Sydney added: "George Lucas and his colleagues are great admirers of the British film industry, with our skills base. We'd much prefer him to do them in Britain, but a tie-up with Pepsi is all to do with marketing. George will be back."

Giles Coren, page 19

Gordonstoun pupils ground RAF

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH

PUPILS at Gordonstoun, the independent boarding school attended by the Princess Royal's children, have grounded the Royal Air Force while they sit their examinations.

The school is three miles from the RAF base at Lossiemouth in Morayshire and directly under the take-off flight path for the RAF's Tornado jets. From today until the end of the month the RAF is banning take-offs at certain times of the day while the 420 pupils sit their exams. James Thomas, a school spokesman, said: "We are directly in the flight path. They are our next-door neigh-



Lossiemouth's Tornados will not fly during exams

hours. They are certainly noisy enough to disrupt pupils' concentration. For most of them, the exams are a life-or-death matter."

Mr Thomas said the RAF and the school had a good history of co-operation. "We tend to socialise at high days and holidays. They send their careers people into the school

a couple of times a year and on the whole they are very co-operative. Occasionally if we need an aerial photograph they will help out."

RAF Lossiemouth said the school had written to the base asking for its co-operation during the examination season. "They sent us a timetable and between Friday May 17

and Friday May 31, at certain times of the day, we will not take off. The ban means a certain amount of disruption and inconvenience, but we can live with it, and if it leads to good community relations then that is encouraging."

The Ministry of Defence is considering flying the Royal Family in a French helicopter for official visits, instead of a new British aircraft which has already been ordered for the RAF.

The two ageing Wessex helicopters assigned to the royals and members of the Government have to be replaced and the MoD is studying a number of options, including purchasing the French Super Puma.

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ON VIDEO

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One in six secondary pupils struggles to read a textbook



Shephard: new survey confirms her concerns

By DAVID CHARTER
EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

READING textbooks and using a dictionary are a struggle for one in six secondary school pupils, a survey disclosed yesterday.

More pupils are arriving at secondary schools years behind their age group in reading, but the Basic Skills Agency found that most of their teachers received no training in teaching the basics of literacy.

The disclosure will add to concerns over reading standards. The findings from 200 schools follow an

inspectors' report earlier on children's reading standards in inner-city primary schools in three London boroughs. This found that two-fifths of 11-year-olds were two years or more behind their age range.

The agency's survey comes as 11-year-olds take national tests in English. Last year's results, which showed that less than half of pupils starting secondary school had reached the level expected of their age, led the Government to introduce league tables of primary schools, to raise standards.

Jim Pateman, a development

officer with the agency, said: "All the evidence indicates that if you have reading problems at ten which are not being tackled, you are likely to come out of school with reading and writing difficulties which are going to make your job and life opportunities severely restricted."

The survey for the agency by MORI found that three in five secondary school teachers had had no in-service training on teaching reading and writing.

Although 65 per cent of the 4,532 pupils surveyed thought they were good readers for their age, 10 per

cent felt they were poor at writing and 20 per cent wanted extra help with reading, while nearly 40 per cent admitted difficulties with spelling. A further 15 per cent said they had difficulty looking up words in the dictionary; 16 per cent had difficulty reading textbooks; and 37 per cent said they needed extra help with mathematics.

Gillian Shephard, the Education and Employment Secretary, is setting up 25 centres for remedial training of primary school teachers in English and mathematics. She acted after Chris Woodhead, the

Chief Inspector of Schools, said there were 15,000 poor teachers in English schools.

Concerns were heightened earlier this month with a highly critical report from Ofsted, the school inspection agency, on reading levels at 45 primary schools in the three inner London boroughs. Mrs Shephard then backed the call from Mr Woodhead for more traditional methods of teaching reading. Yesterday she said: "This survey confirms the message in the Chief Inspector of Schools' annual report and the recent Ofsted study of read-

ing standards in three London boroughs."

The Basic Skills Agency yesterday announced grants to more than 100 secondary schools to help with in-service training in the basics. The move is aimed at helping teachers to make progress with the 10 per cent of pupils who leave school without a GCSE pass. Mr Pateman added: "We have got to do something at secondary level because these kids are otherwise unlikely to achieve at GCSE and to succeed in life."

Letters, page 21

Chirac spared as Glasgow makes meal of beef crisis

By ALAN HAMILTON

PRESIDENT CHIRAC, on the third day of his state visit to Britain, was narrowly saved from yet another potentially embarrassing confrontation with British beef by the good people of Glasgow.

As the President, accompanied by the Prince of Wales, went walkabout in Easterhouse, one of the city's vast, soulless and famously deprived housing estates, a patriotic butcher sprang to action. Tommy Boyle emerged from his shop bearing two trays of buns containing his own finest Scottish beefburgers.

But as he pushed his way through onlookers in a valiant

attempt to offer his wares to the presidential party and thereby hammer home a political point, Mr Boyle was hijacked. The crowd closed in around him. M Chirac strolled past smiling in benign ignorance of the drama, and within seconds every last burger had been snatched and wolfed.

Easterhouse does not see a French President, or indeed a free hamburger, every day. Built in the late 50s and early 60s with almost no social infrastructure, it has twice the unemployment rate of the rest of Glasgow, twice the rate of violent crime and twice the

rate of babies born below normal weight.

But in recent years the Easterhouse community, which has declined to about 40,000, has been making strenuous efforts to pull itself up by its boot straps, with local involvement in planning and public spending decisions, and help to its young people from the Prince of Wales's various charities.

President Chirac had asked to see community work among deprived urban populations in the hope of learning useful lessons for France, where, like Scotland, tenements are widespread. He also wanted to see something of community volunteer groups, given that France will soon end compulsory military service and may replace it with a civilian equivalent.

When M Chirac stepped from his car he was greeted by a crowd of several hundred residents, waving exclusively the Scottish saltire, without a Union Jack in sight. The President went straight to the crowd to shake hands and kiss babies, but beef was on the menu within moments. Jean Craig, who runs a nearby dairy farm, buttonholed M Chirac and told him to keep up the pressure to have the EU beef ban lifted. The President simply smiled, but Michael Forsyth, the Scottish Secretary, leapt between the two and said quickly to the farmer,

who if she is a Tory voter will be the only one for miles: "We're working on it."

The President, who appeared to cope well with the thick local accent, met several young Easterhouse residents who had built up businesses on small start-up grants from the Prince's Trust. M Chirac also met members of the Prince's volunteers, who have developed a form of civilian national service in the community.

At St Leonard's School, M Chirac was greeted in French by Kathleen Devaney, 14, who offered a carefully rehearsed: "M Le President, bienvenue à notre école". The President responded with a

"merci" and a kiss on both Kathleen's cheeks.

At the school the President saw an example of a successful recent venture by the Prince's Trust, a nationwide chain of study support centres where children from noisy or crowded homes can retreat in the evening to do their homework.

He also met Lisa McGrath, 12, dressed as the best known figure of shared Franco-Scottish history, Mary Queen of Scots.

M Chirac appeared impressed by Easterhouse's attempts at self-improvement. "It is a fantastic experience to mobilise the people and the volunteers for the benefit of the majority, particularly the

children," he said, reverting for the first time to French. "It is a wonderful success, and I think we have many ideas to take back to Paris."

As President and Prince later toured a Glasgow optical factory, and an Anglo-French joint venture making defence equipment, the subject of drugs on the Easterhouse estate was raised as the Prince sat with workers during their tea break. He told Albert McKinley, 51, a process inspector at the Pilkington plant, of his concerns for his own sons: "When they are younger you can keep control, but when they get older they get their own minds."

While M Chirac was served British beef when he dined with the Queen on Tuesday, there were no similar encounters yesterday. He enjoyed a lunch of Balmoral salmon at Glasgow's city chambers. Similarly there was not a piece of beef in sight at the French ambassador's residence in London last night, when M Chirac served the Queen French lamb at his return banquet.

They do not, of course, have any scruples about eating beef in Easterhouse. A free burger is a free burger, whatever they say in Brussels.

Beef talks, page 8
Philip Howard, page 20



M Chirac and the Prince meeting residents in Easterhouse during a tour of schemes to improve community life

Police aim for early learning over drugs

By STEWART TENDLER

TEACHING children the dangers of drug abuse should begin in primary school, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner said yesterday.

Sir Paul Condon said young children could be introduced to the subject gently. The dangers would be spelt out as teachers and police talked to classes about general safety and health. Officers were already taking part in drug awareness programmes in some primary schools.

Sir Paul, speaking at the launch of a Scotland Yard campaign against drugs, said: "If we are telling primary schoolchildren about the dangers in life, from the road or strangers, one of the significant dangers they will face is the danger from drugs."

He said every secondary school already had a drug problem or the potential for one. So far, there had been few problems with younger children, although there had been cases of ten-year-olds dabbling with drugs.

A video produced by London schoolchildren is being distributed to every secondary school as part of the £250,000 campaign. Aimed at children aged 12 to 14, it includes interviews with addicts, criminals and prostitutes in rehabilitation units and prison.

Alongside the anti-drugs message, the Yard plans to increase pressure on dealers and traffickers with more intelligence and surveillance work.

Leaders pledge to forge closer cultural links

By MICHAEL BINYON
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

JOHN MAJOR and President Chirac have announced a school partnership project to increase contacts between young people in Britain and France.

Britain has pledged more than £1 million to the "Dialogue 2000" scheme, which over the next four years will enable 200 schools and colleges in both countries to develop innovative exchanges. Pupils and their teachers will spend several

months in their partner schools, working together on joint curriculum projects. The two leaders also announced a programme to take the best of each other's writing and publishing. "Copyright 2000" will encourage more intensive links between authors, translators, journalists and scholars. A Franco-British book fair will be held in October.

Mr Major and M Chirac also announced a joint initiative to step up the fight against drugs.

Leading article, page 21

THE MAN WHO WROTE 'YESTERDAY' TALKS TO STEVE WRIGHT TOMORROW.

Paul McCartney talks about his life-long admiration for Buddy Holly, the Beatles' recent get-together in the studio, and lots more. Plus amazing but true facts, all wrapped up in three hours of classic pop music. Steve Wright's Saturday Show, 10-1pm.

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27th June Algarve	S.C. 7 NTS	6th June Majorca	S.C. 7 NTS

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8 June Calas de Mallorca	14 nts S.C. WAS £315 NOW
11 June Sunsafer	7 nts B.B. WAS £297 NOW
13 June Sunsafer	7 nts S.C. WAS £249 NOW

CANARIES

12 June Fuerteventura	7 nts B.B. WAS £390 NOW
16 June Gran Canaria	7 nts S.C. WAS £269 NOW
1 July Lanzarote	14 nts S.C. WAS £378 NOW

TURKEY

24 June Sunsafer	7 nts R.O. WAS £336 NOW
24 June Marmaris	7 nts B.B. WAS £309 NOW
1 July Kusadasi	14 nts B.B. WAS £345 NOW

GREECE

28 May Zante	14 nts R.O. WAS £295 NOW
12 June Kos	7 nts S.C. WAS £354 NOW
16 July Crete	7 nts B.B. WAS £372 NOW

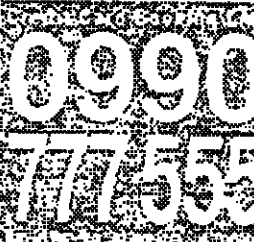
CYPRUS

30 May Sunsafer	14 nts S.C. WAS £470 NOW
19 June Paphos	14 nts S.C. WAS £479 NOW
20 June Ayia Napa	7 nts S.C. WAS £349 NOW

CRUISE/FARAWAY

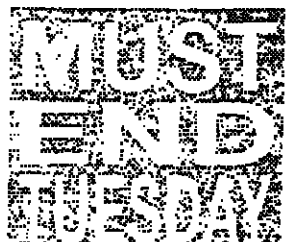
28 May Phuket	14 nts B.B. WAS £440 NOW
29 May Cancun	14 nts R.O. WAS £765 NOW
31 May Caribbean Cruise	9 nts F.B. WAS £294 NOW

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مكتبة من الاصل

'Evil' paedophiles who killed Daniel may never go free

By RICHARD DUCE

TWO paedophiles who acted out their sexual fantasies by kidnapping and murdering a nine-year-old boy were jailed for life yesterday, with a recommendation that they never be released.

A jury took less than two hours to convict Brett Tyler, 30, of murdering Daniel Handley after he and his former lover, Timothy Morss, had sexually abused the boy. Morss, 33, had earlier admitted murder.

Mr Justice Curtis told the two men, who have previous convictions for sex offences with young boys: "You two are evil vultures. Your homosexual lusts are directed against other people's sons."

"No society can tolerate men kidnapping a child off the street while playing, nor such inhuman, callous conduct to a child. You are both calculating men. I don't believe you are truly sorry for what you have done."

Tyler, of no fixed address, and Morss of Leyton, east London, were given three concurrent life sentences for murder, false imprisonment and a serious sexual offence. The judge warned them: "Life means life and I want you to be under no illusion whatsoever that I propose to recommend that you serve exactly that."

He said records of the case should be "preserved forever so anyone considering your futures will be under no illusions as to what you are. Both of you are a terrible danger with your evil and distorted minds. No one is likely to know when, if ever, you are safe to go back on our streets."

After the men were taken down to the cells at the Old Bailey, the judge praised Acting Detective Inspector Stephen Cavanagh, who interviewed Tyler, for resisting the temptation to attack him. "He should be taken before the Commissioner to be congratulated on resisting the temptation to attack Tyler who, in the judgment of most people in the street, should have been attacked."



Daniel Handley: he was snatched from the street

lated on resisting the temptation to attack Tyler who, in the judgment of most people in the street, should have been attacked."

The jury are expected to be offered counselling after listening to the details surrounding Daniel's death.

The boy was four months old in 1986 when Morss and Tyler met for the first time in Wormwood Scrubs, where both were serving sentences for sex offences. Morss had been jailed for five years and Tyler for four.

The prosecution said both had "an abiding, perverted sexual interest in young boys". Morss had harboured a fantasy of abducting, assaulting and then murdering a blond-haired, blue-eyed boy. They had discussed their fantasies during therapy sessions.

Detailing their obsessions was eventually to lead to their capture. After the facts of Daniel's death were made public on the BBC *Crime Watch* programme, a prison officer and a psychiatrist who had interviewed Morss telephoned police to tell them of his fantasy.

Both Tyler and Morss had been abused when they were four years old and living in children's homes. After leaving prison they became lovers, each "winding up" the other

with talk of sex with boys. In 1994, they decided to make Morss's fantasy a reality.

Daniel lived in Beckton, east London. His mother, Maxine, had five children by three different fathers, and two had gone into care because she could no longer cope. The "streetwise" child dressed in hand-me-down clothes and earned small amounts of cash by pushing trolleys for customers at a supermarket.

The two men, cruising streets the prosecution described as an "ideal hunting ground", came upon Daniel, blond-haired and blue-eyed, riding his BMX bicycle.

After bundling him into the back of a blue Peugeot estate car, they drove him to a flat above a cab office in Camberwell, south London, owned by David Guttridge, another of Morss's lovers. There, Morss and Tyler videotaped each other abusing the boy.

The men strangled Daniel as they drove along the M4 towards Bristol. The body was discovered in March last year in a shallow grave close to a house which Morss shared with Guttridge. Tyler and Morss fled to the Philippines, where Tyler had made frequent trips to indulge in his desire for sex with boys and where he also had a Filipino lover.

Their flight was paid for by Guttridge, 59, now living in Brentwood, Essex, who was jailed for 30 months yesterday for attempting to pervert the course of justice. He, too, was a child sex offender who met Morss and Tyler in prison.

Morss returned to England after he fell out with Tyler and was arrested in May last year. Tyler was tracked down by two Scotland Yard detectives, one of them Mr Cavanagh, who travelled to the Philippines. He confessed to strangling Daniel, and again on his return to England, but later retracted the confession and attempted to blame Morss alone for the killing.

After the case, Detective Superintendent Edwin Williams, who headed the inquiry, said: "If you had a scale of evilness, Morss and Tyler would be at the top. There is no higher degree of barbarousness you can go to than what they did to that young child."

Mrs Handley left court declining to comment. She was accompanied by a representative of a Sunday newspaper.

At a brief press conference later, Mr Williams called for the introduction of a national register of known paedophiles so that their movements could be monitored. "It would certainly help future investigations if we knew where paedophiles were living."



Morss, left, and Tyler, described by the judge as "a terrible danger with your evil and distorted minds"



A bushman in animal skins is put on show at a fair in South Africa earlier this month. In Britain fears are growing that tribesmen are to be moved from their desert home

Peers urge action to keep bushmen in the Kalahari

By ALICE THOMSON, POLITICAL REPORTER

THE Government has ordered the British High Commissioner in Botswana to head into the Kalahari desert to meet the threatened Khwe bushmen.

The orders were dispatched yesterday after peers organised a campaign to save the ancient tribe, which they believe is under threat from the Botswana Government.

The peers claim that Botswana's ministers want the Khwe's homeland, the Central Kalahari game reserve, cleared to make way for farms and a growing tourist trade.

The bushmen say that lorries will come after the rainy season to take them away. The 3,000 bushmen left in the reserve have been offered homes in urban settlements with running water, schooling, clinics and free clothing, but refused to go.

Lord Pearson of Rannoch, who led the appeal in the Lords yesterday, said 40,000 years of tradition would end if they were forced into "urban ghettos to wear underwear and eat fast food. They would turn into beggars."

Baroness Chalker of Wallasey, Minister for Overseas Development, tried to calm fears, noting that Botswana had a "very good human rights record". But peers are adamant that the tribe is in danger. They say Britain promised to protect the tribesmen in the 1950s and cannot break the agreement. Over 30,000 tribesmen have already been resettled and have lost their hunter-gatherer skills and culture.

The British High Commissioner, David Beaumont, has been told to take a group of anthropologists and find out what is going on.

Sir Laurens van der Post drew the world's attention to the plight of the bushmen 40 years ago in his film *The Lost World of the Kalahari* and predicted their demise.

In the late 1950s Britain made efforts to support the tribe's interests. In 1961 the Central Kalahari game reserve was established where the Khwe people would have special rights. Sir Seretse Khama, the President of Botswana after independence, honoured the accord until he died in 1980.

But in the past decade the bushmen have lost much of their land. Lord Pearson said they had not been included in the list of Botswana's eight official tribes and had no representation. He said that the policy was shortsighted because, far from preventing tourists from viewing game, the tribes were an attraction in themselves and protected the fragile ecosystem.

Baroness Thatcher and the Prince of Wales are supporters of the campaign. It was Lord Tebbit of Chingford who asked Baroness Chalker to send the High Commissioner. She said she doubted the rumours but, if they were true, aid might be put in question.

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Shake-up in top law jobs offers prospect of radical pairing

By Frances Gibb, Legal Correspondent

THE judiciary faces far-reaching change next week when the new holders of the two most influential posts in the English justice system are announced.

Sir Thomas Bingham, Master of the Rolls, 62, is tipped to take over as Lord Chief Justice, the most senior serving judge, after the announcement that Lord Taylor of Gosforth is retiring early because he has cancer.

His place as Master of the Rolls and head of the Court of Appeal's civil division is likely to go to Lord Woolf, the law lord currently drawing up plans for the biggest overhaul of civil justice in 50 years. The appointments would usher in the most radical partnership in the justice system this century and could lead to an era of unprecedented reform.

Sir Thomas is considered one of the most formidable intellects in the judiciary. He would be more palatable to the Government than the other

front-runner for the post, Lord Justice Rose, a senior Court of Appeal judge who is talked of as the judges' choice and who has the backing of many Queen's Bench judges as well as many at the criminal Bar.

But Lord Justice Rose has made no secret of his opposition to Michael Howard's tougher sentencing plans and would follow Lord Taylor in fighting them.

Sir Thomas is considered an outstanding Master of the Rolls who, despite more limited experience in the criminal courts, would be equally able to assume the more politically influential post of Lord Chief Justice.

Many thought he would not wish to take on the job in its present form. But Sir Thomas would be likely to extend the role of Lord Chief Justice beyond the daily grind of criminal appeals. He might move more into the high-profile field of judicial review, which would enable him to

retain a key influence over the development of case law.

Sir Thomas's style is less confrontational and his language more conciliatory than that of Lord Taylor and he is not in the typical mould of the judge who has come through the ranks of the Bar and beats the drum of the circuits.

One observer said: "He is a bit like Mackay in that he starts from first principles — he doesn't carry any baggage — and looks at everything afresh."

In particular he favours scrapping the High Court circuit system. He also was the only senior judge to back the Lord Chancellor's proposals to break the Bar's monopoly of advocacy rights in the higher courts.

He has also criticised Michael Howard's proposals for minimum sentences, but in the same breath gave succour to the Home Secretary by expressing sympathy with the reasoning behind the plans.



Sir Robin Auld, 58, Court of Appeal judge. The other outside tip. Father was a toolmaker who later became a publican. Failed 11-plus and went to a technical college. Won a scholarship to study law at King's College London while working as lorry driver and baker's assistant to support himself. Did Bar finals and a PhD while living in his father's pub near Dorking. Friendly and easy-going. Says he has voted for all three main political parties.

Sir Thomas Bingham, 62, Master of the Rolls. Razor-sharp mind: brilliant at school (Sedburgh) and Oxford (a first and the Eldon Law Scholarship). Liberal-leaning views based on reasoned analysis, rather than gut emotion. Austere, somewhat forbidding manner conceals shyness and sense of humour. Excellent after-dinner speaker. Does not suffer fools gladly but known for his kindness. Practising Anglican. Enjoys tending his sheep at cottage in Wales.

Lord Justice Kennedy, 60, Solicitor-General. The late Lord Devlin, he would be the first Roman Catholic in the job. Ampleforth College and Cambridge. Friendly, down to earth with easy manner — in the "moderate judge" mould. No side, clubbable. All-rounder who would command respect but perhaps not break ground. Leanings conservative. A friend said: "He is quite unpretentious, has no grand style and travels on the Tube." Strong family man.

Lord Justice Rose, 59, Court of Appeal judge and chairman of Criminal Justice Consultative Council. Genial, friendly, with sardonic sense of humour. Clubbable. Excellent brain: Leeds University then Wadham, Oxford (first in law and Eldon Scholar). In the mould of Lord Taylor, with both enjoying music and playing the piano. Once noted for his penchant for fedora hats. Would take up the baton from Lord Taylor in fighting the Government on sentencing.

Lord Woolf, 63, law lord. Possible for Lord Chief Justice and Master of the Rolls — latter most likely. Fettes College and University College London. The radical's choice. Liberal, humane reformer with a gentle manner. Prominent member of the Jewish community in London. Chaired Strangeways riots inquiry and now major inquiry into civil justice. Was tipped for Master of the Rolls last time. Champion of need to protect individual rights against State.

He has endeared himself to ministers in other respects: he said that the view of Sir Richard Scott on public interest immunity was "not one that all judges and practitioners would have shared".

Sir Thomas, however, is far from being a government lap dog. He went on the offensive over the shortage of judges in

the Court of Appeal and would not hesitate to take up arms for the judiciary if he thought their independence was at risk from the executive.

The names of Sir Thomas and Lord Justice Rose are likely to have gone forward to the Prime Minister from the Lord Chancellor after taking discreet soundings over the past

two weeks from senior judges and leaders of the profession. The Prime Minister will recommend one to the Queen.

Lord Woolf, who chaired the inquiry into the Strangeways prison riots, would be following in the steps of Lord Denning by coming down from the House of Lords to head the Court of Appeal. He

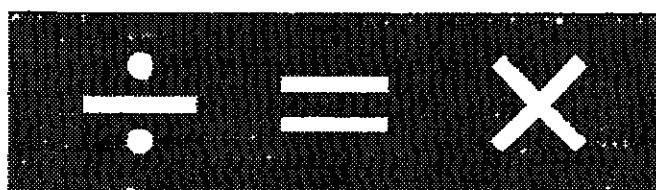
is now putting the finishing touches to his report on civil justice, which aims to cut delays and legal costs. He would be ideally placed to oversee the reforms, which would turn judges into trial managers, controlling the pace of litigation and setting deadlines on the parties.

Two other names are also

being tipped for Lord Chief Justice: Lord Justice Kennedy, the late Lord Devlin's son-in-law, and Lord Justice Auld. Both are senior Court of Appeal judges who have a role in helping with the administration of the court under Lord Taylor.

Law Report, page 42

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Ostrich takes off as beef alternative

WEEKEND SHOPPING

OSTRICH meat went on sale nationwide for the first time yesterday with Tesco stocking it in more than 300 stores. Spurred on by a successful buffalo meat promotion, the supermarket chain is giving customers the chance to sample this low-fat, high-protein alternative to beef.

At £7.99 for two ostrich steaks and £3.99 for two burgers, it is not cheap, but Tesco believes the BSE scare and the growing market for exotic foods will encourage buyers. Announced promotions include:

Asda: diced turkey thigh £2.40 kg, braising steak £3.58 kg, stewing steak £3.38 kg, Jersey new potatoes 44p lb.
Budgens: whole chicken (2.3kg) £4.39, boneless pork chops £5.42 kg, Cathedral City mature cheddar £2.69 lb, tomatoes 49p lb.
Co-op: New Zealand lamb chops £6.49 kg, whole chicken (1.8kg) £3.89, plaice £6.99 kg, thin sliced honey roast ham £1.39 for 227g.

Harrods: marinated haunch of Scotch venison £3.49 for 100g, three-bean salad 75p for 100g, frankfurter and potato salad baps £1.60 each.

Iceland: southern fried chicken £2.59 for 794g, mushroom and garlic-filled chicken £1.49 for two, lemon chicken £2.29 for 160g, crunchy fish sticks

£1.49 for 24, breaded cod fillets £1.99 for 600g.
Marks & Spencer: New Zealand lamb leg knuckle £4.99 kg, two Caledonian salmon fillets (283g) £3.99, four Sweet-heart tomatoes £1.19.

Morrisons: cod steaks £4.38 kg, whole salmon £4.38 kg, salmon steaks £5.04 kg, dwarf beans 59p for 200g, Golden Delicious apples 29p lb.

Safeway: frying steak £6.39 a kg, super chicken (2.27kg) £4.99, honey roast turkey 99p for 4 lb, Lincolnshire pork sausages £1.19 lb, green peppers 84p lb, broccoli 59p lb.

Sainsbury's: salmon steaks £7.50 kg, honey roast waffle thin ham £1.59 for 400g, English matured cheddar £3.85 kg, red peppers £1.29 lb.

Somerfield: pork loin chops £3.65 kg, salmon steaks £7.27 kg, fillet steak £16.05 kg, Quorn mince £1.39 for 350g, prawn coleslaw 72p for 250g.

Tesco: turkey steaks £5.95 kg, topside of beef £4.99 kg, salmon joints £2.95 lb, asparagus £1.99 bundle, Valencia oranges £1.89 for 1.5kg.

Waitrose: prime mince 99p for 500g, British braising steak £3.99 kg, Jersey new potatoes 49p lb, baking potatoes 35p lb, sweetcorn 99p for two, chicory 79p pack, Royal Gala apples 49p lb.

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£6,000	£768.04	£9,889.92	13.8%
£7,000	£894.38	£11,538.24	13.8%
£8,000	£1,020.72	£13,186.56	13.8%
£9,000	£1,147.06	£14,834.88	13.8%
£10,000	£1,273.40	£16,483.20	13.8%

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THE TIMES
RSC go
west with
base in
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RSC goes west with base in Plymouth

By Russell Jenkins

THE Royal Shakespeare Company is to bring down the curtain at its London base for six months each year and increase its presence in the regions with a new Plymouth residency and touring company.

The RSC will put on its full repertoire at Plymouth's three main theatres throughout November before its truncated annual season at the capital's Barbican Theatre.

Adrian Noble, artistic director of the RSC, said it was an historic day for the company, but admitted: "The window of opportunity to see RSC productions in London is much less than it used to be."

He said that the renewed emphasis on the regions would mean "slightly fewer" productions in London, leading to an unspecified number of job losses and other changes. "We are looking forward to a whole new chapter in the history of the company. We were acutely aware not only of a national gain but also, to some degree, of loss, especially in London."

Mr Noble estimated that the company would stage two or three fewer productions at the Barbican each year. He emphasised, however, that this had nothing to do with declining audiences in the West End. Audiences had risen every year since he took the helm in 1991, with the exception of last year when seat occupancy fell to 73 per cent.

The RSC pioneered winter residencies in the regions more than 20 years ago when it established a base in Newcastle upon Tyne. The North East has since become the company's recognised third home. Plymouth was one of 14 bids to attract the RSC repertoire, winning out over Cardiff and Norwich.

Chris Mavin, the chairman of Plymouth City Council's leisure services committee, said: "It makes us the cultural centre of the region and offers a tremendous opportunity both culturally and educationally."

Grahame Long, of South West Arts, said: "This is a residency for the region, far more than a residency for Plymouth."

RAF mother wins £10,000 for being split from baby

By Michael Evans, Defence Correspondent

AN RAF servicewoman who was separated from her four-month-old baby and posted to a base 300 miles away when she returned from maternity leave was awarded £10,000 compensation yesterday.

An industrial tribunal heard that Caroline Vine, 27, pleaded to remain at RAF Coltishall, in Norfolk, where she and her husband were serving, but was told she must put her job before her baby and was sent to live in single women's accommodation at RAF St Athan, near Cardiff.

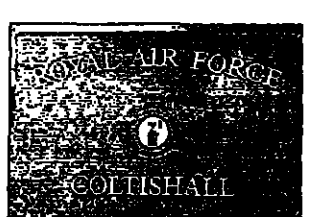
She had to leave Marcus, now 15 months, to be cared for by her husband Saul, 28, and a nanny. She experienced such stress and slept so badly that an RAF psychiatrist diagnosed her as suffering from separation anxiety. She claimed sexual discrimination after leaving the service in October last year.

Her victory has opened the possibility of a new round of compensation claims against the Ministry of Defence. It has already paid out more than £50 million to servicewomen who were sacked after becoming pregnant in breach of European sex discrimination legislation.

All servicewomen who have babies are entitled to return to their jobs after maternity leave, but under RAF rules they can be given a new posting at any time. Andrew Proctor, Mrs Vine's solicitor,

said: "This will have implications for other women in the Armed Forces who have also been discriminated against. The only hope is that now the RAF will bow to pressure and drop its outdated policy."

Mrs Vine, who was an electrical engineer servicing Jaguar aircraft, told her superiors that she was pregnant in 1994. During 7½ months of maternity leave and holiday, she was placed, for adminis-



The base in Norfolk where Mrs Vine worked

trative purposes, in a category referred to as the non-effective posting group.

She said yesterday: "This group includes personnel serving a prison sentence, those who have gone absent without leave and others who are ill. When I returned to work, I was treated as the lowest priority."

Mr Proctor said that although all RAF personnel knew they could be posted, Mrs Vine had expected to be at Coltishall for four or five years, which was the normal posting. Yet she had been

there for only 18 months when she was offered St Athan or Lissie, in Glamorgan — even further away.

She was able to make the five-hour car journey between St Athan and Coltishall only at weekends, and said that she lost her maternal bonding with her son. "Whenever I tried to pick him up, he cried and only stopped crying when my husband took him. I can't tell you how upsetting that was," she said.

After a month at St Athan, she was put on sick leave and returned to Coltishall when it was confirmed that she was suffering from separation anxiety. Her welfare officer at St Athan tried earlier to get her relocated to Coltishall on compassionate grounds. "But I didn't qualify," Mrs Vine said.

Mrs Vine, who now works as a civil servant near Coltishall, told the tribunal in Norwich: "The pressure on me brought about by the separation was unbearable and I decided, with immense sadness, reluctance and anger, that I would have to apply for early voluntary release. Had I known that I would have to move away from my home and family I would not have become pregnant."

She had to pay £350 for leaving the RAF three years before the end of her 12-year contract.

Squadron Leader Ben

Bureaucrats relent over 'inseparable' nursing home couple



Bill and May Hill have been together for 71 years

AN ELDERLY couple who were to be separated by bureaucracy after 71 years together have been given a reprieve yesterday. After a public outcry, social services chiefs ordered that Bill and May Hill should be allowed to stay together.

The couple, both aged 85, were childhood sweethearts and have been inseparable since they were 14. But under strict spending guidelines, Mrs Hill would have had to move from the residential home in which they were living. While Mr Hill quali-

fied for council funding for his place at the £2,000-a-month private nursing home, his wife did not.

The Hills moved into The Heathers, in Peterborough, five months ago and spent their meagre savings on providing care for themselves. When their money began to run out, the council carried out fitness tests and deemed that only Mr Hill, a retired railwayman, was ill enough to qualify for help.

Yesterday, however, Janet Jones, a spokeswoman for Cambridgeshire County

Council, said: "The couple will not be split up. We understand that Mrs Hill's condition has deteriorated since she was assessed several months ago and we are currently carrying out a further assessment."

She added: "Social services departments across the country daily face the dilemma of providing services for couples where the needs of husbands and wives are not the same. We try to ensure wherever possible that care services are provided in such a way as to avoid couples being split up."

Age Concern, which condemned the original decision to separate the couple as appalling, welcomed the reversal. Margaret McLellan, a spokeswoman, said: "It's good for this couple because of the media attention. But there are a lot of people out there that we don't know about who will be parted. We have to look more carefully at how long-term care is evaluated, assessed and paid for."

Staff at The Heathers were delighted for the Hills. "We've been told the good news and everyone is very happy about it," a spokesman said.



Saul and Caroline Vine with Marcus. Mrs Vine said she lost her bond with him

Teenager denies killing head

A boy aged 15, accused of murdering the headmaster Philip Lawrence in northwest London last December, appeared briefly at the Old Bailey yesterday to deny the charge.

The boy and a 15-year-old co-defendant also denied conspiracy to cause grievous bodily harm and wounding with intent to cause grievous bodily harm to a schoolboy. The case has been set to begin in September.

Tonypany better

The former Speaker, Viscount Tonypany, 87, was recovering at his home in Cardiff after leaving St Thomas's Hospital in London, where he was treated for pneumonia. "I'm feeling much better and I am making progress," he said.

Judge halts trial

The trial at Manchester Crown Court of a vicar and his churchwarden for alleged theft was halted after Judge Humphries heard legal argument. He ordered a new trial in September of the Rev Stephen Ashton and Cameron Luke, who deny the charges.

Spanish honour

The historian Sir John Elliott has won this year's Prince of Asturias prize for social sciences, one of Spain's most prestigious awards. The former Oxford professor was praised in particular for dismantling the stereotypes and clichés of Spanish history.

Bomber returns

Britain's last flying Lancaster bomber is back in service after an overhaul. The City of Lincoln, based at RAF Coningsby in Lincolnshire, has been fitted with a new main spar — never attempted on the Lancaster — and is ready for the display season.

Global account

The total amount of cash in circulation worldwide is £1,500 billion, or £273 for each person, according to the science magazine Focus, which made the calculation in response to a reader's letter. In Britain the figure is £23.4 billion, or £400 each.

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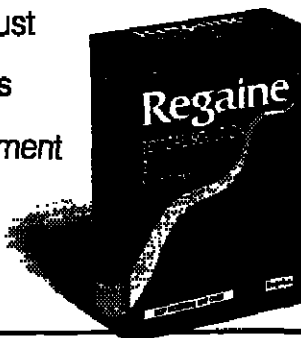
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Kidnappings undermine Papua gold-diggers

By DAVID WATTS

THE Indonesian special forces' deft rescue of four British hostages from the hands of Papuan guerrillas is a victory for both sides.

Indonesia has been able to overcome some of its negative international image with a restrained military operation, but the hostages' endorsement of their captors' view of how Jakarta is destroying their prehistoric inheritance is precisely what the Free Papua Movement (OPM) had hoped to achieve.

The Papuans have been forced out of their mountain homes through the activities of a larger-than-life American, Jim-Bob Moffett, chairman of the parent company, Freeport McMoRan of New Orleans, which is part British-owned. It operates one of the world's largest copper and gold mines in the mountains of Irian Jaya on ancestral lands that the Papuans have inhabited for thousands of years.

The mine is 7,000ft up in the mountains that form the spine of the island which Irian Jaya shares with Papua New Guinea.

Using huge mechanical shovels the firm has gouged away the mountain top. The one billion tonnes of copper and gold ore being harvested from the mountain constitutes the second richest seam of such material in the world, earning huge profits for Freeport/RIZ.

Mr Moffett, who declares he is in a "new Cold War" with

The local tribes complain that, as well as being driven off their lands, the mining operations cause pollution through the run-off from the mine and are changing the climate, affecting a unique local geographic phenomenon: a glacier. They say there is a virtual system of apartheid in operation which excludes them from work at the

and academics back home are less impressed and the University of Austin, Texas, and the Catholic Loyola University in New Orleans have both been critical of the company, resulting in threats of legal action.

The British hostages, members of the Lorentz 95 expedition from Cambridge University, were there to work with the local tribes in learning how they have lived with and exploited nature, without doing it serious damage, over the centuries.

The OPM has its roots in the annexation of the territory by the Indonesians in 1963. At that time the Irianese wanted to ally themselves with neighbouring Papua New Guinea, but the so-called "Act of Free Choice" was anything but and Jakarta took over the territory against the people's wishes.

The OPM claims that 43,000 Papuans have lost their lives in clashes with the Government since 1977. The Papuans claim that 2,000 Indonesian soldiers have been killed in the battle for tribal lands.

The tribes complain that mining pollution affects a unique local geographic phenomenon: a glacier

his critics in non-governmental organisations, says of Freeport/RIZ: "This is not a job for us, it's a religion. The NGO situation is something we're going to have to deal with." He and his workers live in what is virtually an extra-territorial stretch of the United States enjoying the close protection of the Indonesian military, which often uses the company's aircraft.

mine and in which the Indonesian Government is resettling thousands of families from other parts of the archipelago.

Mr Moffett's response to the pollution charge has been to set up a laboratory dedicated to the maintenance and regeneration of the local environment. The scale of pollution caused by the mine, he claims, "is equivalent to me pissing in the Arafura Sea". Students



British hostages Daniel Start, left, and William Oates relax on the Indonesian Air Force jet during its flight to Jakarta yesterday after they were plucked to safety from a rebel camp during a seven-hour battle in the jungle



Barchevsky: agreed to disagree with China

China and US fire shots in trade war

FROM JONATHAN MIRSKY IN HONG KONG

AMERICA and China have dragged their economic canons to the front line in a multibillion-dollar trade war, but after an exchange of verbal blasts are expected, as usual, to resume normal business.

The feeble agreement last week on China's sale of nuclear components points the way to an equally empty deal on protection of intellectual property. After months of negotiations, the formidable women who represent the two sides — Wu Yi, China's Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Co-operation, and Charlene Barshevsy, Acting US Trade Representative — agreed to disagree in Peking on Wednesday. Within minutes, each side had tabled its threatened sanctions.

Each package amounts to about \$2 billion (£1.2 billion). Washington is threatening punishment for what it claims is Peking's failure to honour last year's agreement to shut more than 30 factories churning out pirated CDs, computer software, and video and laser films.

The US list includes textiles, largely made in southern China where Hong Kong manufacturers own many of the factories, coffee machines and telephones, jewellery, medical gloves and sporting goods.

Winston Lord, the US Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia, said in Tokyo yesterday that if Washington had retreated, domestic agitation to withdraw China's most favoured nation trading status would have risen, and Peking would have lost respect for the US. Peking is retaliating for what it alleges is unfair US pressure. A spokesman said China "has done a better job than any other country" in protecting intellectual rights.

China's sanctions list imposes 100 per cent tariffs on US grain and many other products. Peking also threatens to suspend planned US enterprises, including the manufacture of cars.

Diary tells of family starvation in Tokyo

FROM ROBERT WHYMANT IN TOKYO

THE diary of an elderly woman who starved to death with her bedridden son in the heart of Tokyo has prompted criticism of the flawed welfare system in one of the world's most affluent societies.

The 77-year-old woman and her invalid son, 41, whose names have not been released, had been dead for nearly a month when police discovered their bodies on April 27. Police found no food apart from some tea leaves in the tiny flat — a stone's throw from a glittering shopping complex called the Sunshine Building — and no money except for 28 yen (40p).

They found a notepad, however, with a harrowing account of the pair's final weeks, excerpts of which were obtained by the *Asahi Shinbun* newspaper. In the first entry, dated January 1, 1996, the mother wrote: "We are grateful for being able to greet the new year. We can't pay the rent for February and we have no money to live on. We spend every day worrying about what will become of us. I am worried that the gas and electricity will soon be cut off."

"January 11, 1996: I haven't taken a bath for ten years, my son for 15 years. I haven't done any laundry for seven or eight years."

"March 8, 1996: For a long time my son and I have been living on pieces of biscuit. We are about to run out of food."

The last entry reads: "March 11, 1996: We finally ran out of food this morning. From tomorrow we will have nothing to put in our mouths. I wonder if we will be able to keep on drinking tea each day ... I am worried my child may die before me. Please let us die together."

Police said the woman, who was widowed four years ago, lived on a state pension of 100,000 yen (£625) a month, out of which she paid 85,000 yen (£531) in rent.

Welfare authorities say the pair would have qualified for benefits, but the mother feared they would have to move into cheaper accommodation as required by the stringent rules governing welfare payments. "I would rather die free," she wrote.

Ownership of a car by a recipient is rarely allowed, and some authorities insist that beneficiaries get rid of their television sets. Inspections are carried out to ensure that a recipient is not consuming beer or other alcohol, or otherwise enjoying life.

"Japan is completely underdeveloped as far as welfare is concerned," said Ryu Otomo, a political analyst. "This is our dark little secret."

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Yeltsin to end call-up in bid for youth vote

By THOMAS DE WAAL IN MOSCOW AND MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

PRESIDENT Yeltsin played an electoral ace yesterday by promising to abolish conscription in the Russian Army by 2000 and announcing that, with immediate effect, only volunteers would be sent to serve in Chechnya.

The move was a deliberate attempt to woo the youth vote in the run-up to the presidential election on June 16. He said soldiers serving in "conflict areas" would do so only on contract and on a voluntary basis, saving at a stroke thousands of young people from serving in Chechnya and Tajikistan.

In another nod to the middle-class electorate, Mr Yeltsin also signed a decree phasing out capital punishment in line with Russia's admission to the Council of Europe.

All three decrees were part of an increasingly dynamic strategy to be all things to all parts of the electorate. Mr Yeltsin has already appealed to traditional left-wing voters by signing a treaty of economic integration between Russia and Belorussia and promising

to pay workers overdue wages. Gennadi Zyuganov, his main challenger, by contrast, is fenced in by his narrow ideological commitments as head of the Communist Party.

The decrees, however, seemed more about political theatre than reality. The Yeltsin Government has supposedly been pursuing a strategy of switching from conscript to contract armed forces for several years. Pavel Grachev, the Defence Minister, announced a three-stage programme: a period of stock-taking until the end of 1994, then modernisation of the armed forces, developing into a predominantly volunteer force, with recruits signing up for three or more years.

This programme, however, has run into the ground. There has been little modernisation, the restructuring of the airborne and rapid deployment forces has been slow and piecemeal, and the number of contract troops is believed to be dropping, not increasing.

Dr Mark Galeotti, a Rus-

sian military expert, said Mr Yeltsin would not be able to afford a professional army. The main aim of the decrees, he said, was to woo Russian mothers with teenage sons who feared they would be conscripted to serve in Chechnya, where there are about 40,000 troops, mainly Interior Ministry forces.

Although previous promises not to send conscripts as peacekeepers to places such as Moldova have been broken, Mr Yeltsin has clearly decided it is vital to mobilise the youth vote. An opinion poll this week found only 29 per cent of Russian 18 to 24-year-olds intended to vote for Mr Yeltsin, while 8 per cent would vote for Mr Zyuganov; the vast majority were undecided.

Hatred of military service is the one issue that unites all youth and conscription rates in some towns are as low as 20 per cent. Many teenagers slash their wrists, drink poison or feign schizophrenia to avoid the army. To starvation rations and routine bullying has been added the prospect of

becoming, in the Russian phrase, "cannon meat" in Chechnya. The slaughter of a division of conscripts from the city of Samara on New Year's Eve 1994 in Grozny, the Chechen capital, caused widespread anger and dented Mr Yeltsin's popularity at the time.

Mr Zyuganov will be hard-pressed to respond to the policy initiatives. He was one of the sponsors of a law in the Duma last year that prolonged military service from 18 months to two years, and his older, old-fashioned electorate will not look so kindly on the end of conscription.

The Russian armed forces are supposed to be about 1.5 million strong, but the figure is probably closer to one million, three-quarters of whom are in the army, although the General Staff is continually lobbying the President to increase numbers. About half the soldiers fighting in Chechnya are on contract and earning salaries of £500 a month, high by Russian standards.



A Yeltsin poster goes up in Moscow yesterday as the presidential election campaign gets into full swing

Orthodox Church backs President's return to power

By THOMAS DE WAAL

THE head of the Russian Orthodox Church, Patriarch Aleksii II, has become the latest public figure to endorse Boris Yeltsin's re-election bid as all the power of the state machine is mobilised in his favour.

On a visit to the Urals city of Perm, reported in the newspaper *Segodnya* yesterday, the patriarch said he had instructed church parishes round the country to tell their congregations to "take part in the elections and support those in power".

The patriarch, who has good relations with Mr Yeltsin, similar to the old links between the church and Tsar, said a Communist victory would be a disaster for the church. "We have to explain what the church had to live through under the Soviet regime and what religious freedom it enjoys now."

An attempt earlier this week by Gennadi Zyuganov, the Communist Party leader and main challenger to Mr Yeltsin, to play the religious card, flopped. He visited one of Russia's most famous monasteries at Diveyevo but was rebuffed by the abbot and looked embarrassed when he failed to kiss a holy relic.

Endorsement from on high is only one sign among many

that things are moving in Mr Yeltsin's favour. Even more critically, one month before the first round of the elections on June 16, more and more election watchers are saying that he is planning to win anyway, by fair means or foul.

"I believe that Yeltsin will remain in his office either by the results of honest elections, or by falsification of the elections or without any elections," Nikolai Petrov, a political analyst with the Carnegie Endowment in Moscow, said last night. "But in any case Yeltsin will remain in place."

The President's advantage is particularly evident in the media, where he now effectively controls all six main Russian television channels, the essential propaganda weapon in a country of 11 time zones. The other ten candidates on the ballot for June 16 finally gained a small foothold on the airwaves this week with the allocation of free ten-minute slots on radio and television.

In his first outing on air Mr Zyuganov was shown in an unprofessional clip discussing his beliefs on a park bench with a woman journalist. "Lies have become the main method for the current authorities' existence," a rattled Mr Zyuganov said.

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Plot to blow up El Al jet triggers airport alert

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER
IN JERUSALEM

ISRAELI ordered a security alert at airports and ports yesterday after it was disclosed that the terrorist with a British passport who was injured in an explosion in an east Jerusalem hotel nearly five weeks ago was a Hezbollah agent planning to destroy an El Al jet in mid-air.

Diplomatic sources said Britain's M16 and Israel's Mossad secret service co-operated closely during the investigation after the April 12 blast in the seedy Lawrence Hotel. Israeli police confirmed that the terrorist was travelling on a passport issued to Andrew Jonathan Charles Newman, a trainee accountant. The passport was stolen while he was in Paris in April 1993.

The discovery that the Iranian-backed Hezbollah terrorist, Hussein Muhammad Mikdad, was using a British travel document has led to concern that other Arab terrorists may be using stolen British passports. British passports are among the most coveted in the world by

Injured terrorist with British passport 'carried radio bomb'

terrorists because they command respect," an Israeli security source said.

A blanket ban on publication of details of the case was lifted only yesterday. The bomber, who lost both legs, an arm and was blinded, has remained under heavy guard at Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem. An initial false report had led to the assumption that he was a British Jew planning to blow up Al-Aqsa mosque, Islam's third holiest site.

A terse Israeli police statement yesterday told a different story. It also raised fears that Iran may be trying to engineer a spectacular terrorist raid before the Israeli election on May 29.

According to the Israeli version, Mr Mikdad, a Shia Muslim from Lebanon, is a member of Hezbollah. He was associated with Sheikh Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah, its fanatical spiritual leader

who receives his military orders from Tehran's mullahs.

Before leaving for Israel, Mr Mikdad — whose chances of survival are described as slim — spent time in the Iranian Embassy in Beirut. He arrived in Israel on April 4 on a Swissair flight from Zurich. After days in Tel Aviv, he went to the Lawrence Hotel in Saladin Street near Jerusalem's walled city on April 9.

For Mossad, the most worrying aspect is that he was able to smuggle nearly a kilogram of US-made RDX plastic explosives through Zurich and Ben Gurion airports. A Shin Bet security official said just 200 grams (7oz) would have been enough to blow up a jet.

The security sources said that, although he had a return Swissair ticket to Zurich for April 18, it was believed he intended to swap this for an El Al flight. "It seems Hezbollah

wanted to exclude anything which might upset the Europeans. That is why he did not blow up the plane as it was flying from Zurich to Tel Aviv," a security official said. "The idea was to attack an El Al plane leaving Israel."

The hotel blast, which foiled the plot, came a day after Israel launched its 16-day blitz last month against Hezbollah in southern Lebanon.

The police statement said a Sony clock radio was modified to conceal a bomb. The device would have been detonated by the use of a hollow rubber tube which had replaced the AM antenna. Western security experts said a similar bomb was used to blow up the PanAm jet over Lockerbie in 1988.

Last night, Western diplomats ridiculed a Hezbollah statement from Beirut denying Mr Mikdad's involvement. A diplomat said: "It was a failed operation but one that had potential to aggravate the Middle East situation to a very dangerous degree. Hezbollah's main aim will be to try to avoid any Israeli retaliation, now that it has been uncovered."



An Islamic militant brandishes the Koran yesterday as he awaits the verdict of the high security court at his trial in Cairo. He was one of nine members of Islamic

Egyptian militants jailed

Jihad jailed for plotting to assassinate several Egyptian ministers and other senior officials. Hassan Muhammad Hashim, the leader, who was facing the death

penalty, received a five-year sentence. Two other defendants were given 15 years' hard labour, and the others were jailed for between three and ten years. (AFP)

Rock split as voters assess Bossano

FROM DOMINIQUE SEARLE
IN GIBRALTAR

GIBRALTAR will wake up this morning to discover who will lead the Rock into 2000. The outcome — which for the first time in two decades has not been totally clear to observers — will leave the Rock more divided than ever.

Gibraltar yesterday saw the highest turnout in 16 years, with more than 55 per cent of the 18,400 electors having cast their vote by midway through the electoral day.

Joe Bossano, the leader of the Socialist Labour Party, who has been in power for eight years, and Peter Caruana, his main Social Democrat opponent, spent the day at the polling stations with their wives.

They, too, seemed uncertain who would be asked to swear allegiance to the Queen this afternoon in The Convent, a 16th-century Franciscan monastery that is the Governor's official residence.

The professional classes seemed to have turned out in force to back the Social Democrats to deprive Mr Bossano of the high support (73 per cent) he won in the 1992 poll, when the Social Democrats managed only 23 per cent.

European hunt for 'Lisbon Ripper'

BY TUNKU VARADARAJAN

A PORTUGUESE serial killer dubbed the "Lisbon Ripper" is being hunted across Europe.

He is being sought by police in four countries where he has killed, as well as in Portugal. Lisbon police do not rule out the possibility that he is in Britain.

The "Ripper" is believed to have killed at least seven women since 1992, three in Portugal and one each in Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark and The Netherlands. All his victims, the last of whom was murdered late last year, were young, drug-dependent prostitutes.

The consistent pattern of the murders has convinced Portuguese police and Interpol that the killings were committed by the same man. Victims have been strangled, then disembowelled with a shard of glass. On no occasion has there been evidence of rape.

He is believed to be white, aged between 35 and 40, tall, with a pathological hatred of women, and probably suffering from Aids. Police think that he may be a lorry driver whose work takes him across Europe.

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TODAY, The Times offers you the chance to win tickets to the biggest sporting event in Britain for 30 years — the Euro 96 European soccer championships.

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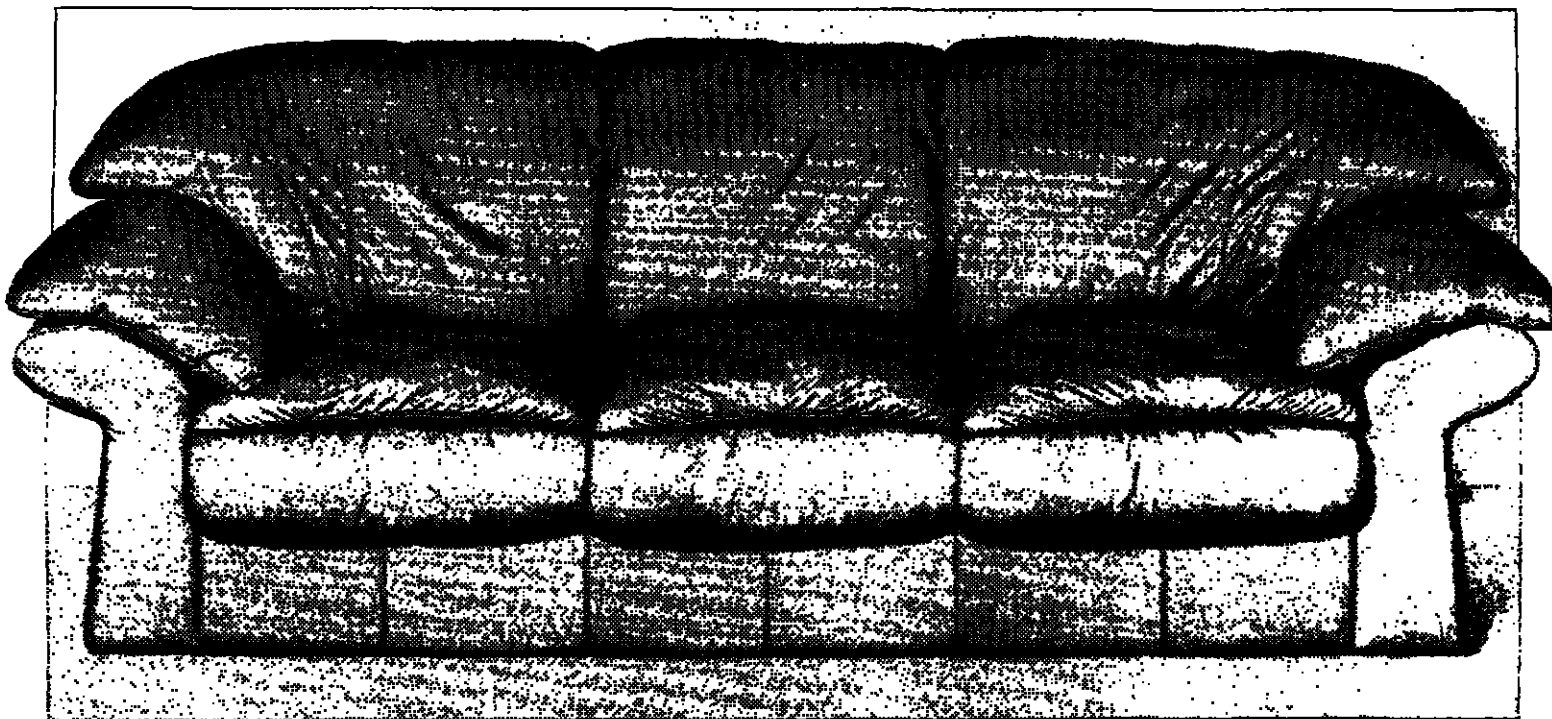
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The winners will be the first six names selected at random from all correct answers received with 10 tokens attached. Normal Times Newspapers competition rules apply. The prizes available are tickets provided by the Football Association and may not be resold under any circumstances.

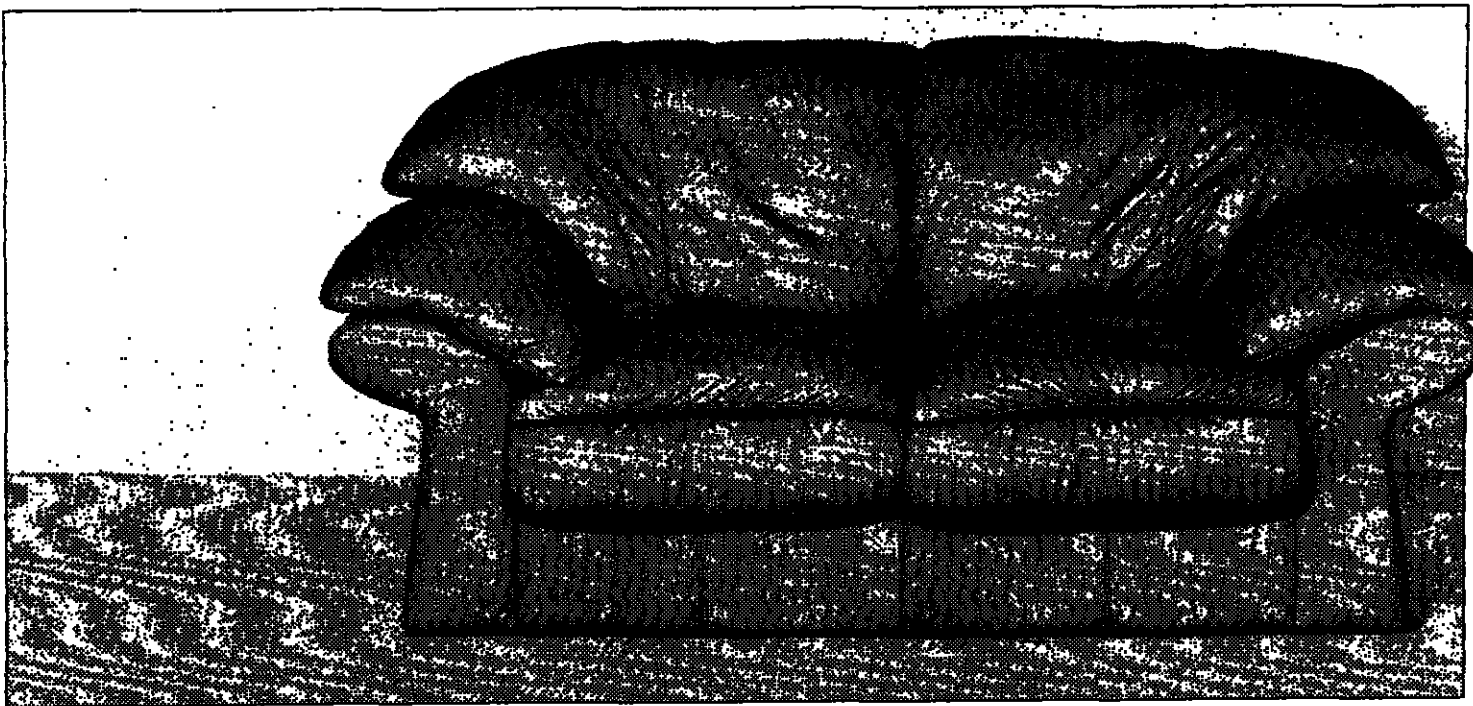
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Seven fall out in Peru

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In the week that four Britons were rescued from Indonesia, we talk to four who endured a very different jungle ordeal

IT SOUNDED like the adventure of a lifetime: a journey through the jungle in which seven young people would discover the mysteries of the Amazon and, in the process, uncover their secret strengths. The plight of the four young Britons held captive for four months in Indonesia has brought home how dangerous such "character-building" expeditions can be. Yet for the intrepid adventurers featured in a forthcoming Channel 4 documentary, *Seven Go Mad in Peru*, what transpired was more farce than near-tragedy. Their bold experiment in fostering team spirit rapidly degenerated into a nightmare of petty squabbling and physical privations.

Last July Will Butler-Adams, a 21-year-old student at Newcastle University, gathered together a random crew of distant acquaintances and set off for Peru and a nine-week odyssey through dense jungle to an Indian village. The hopes of the group, aged between 21 and 30, were high when they first met a fortnight before their departure. Yet despite taking part in an Army-organised survival weekend, most were unprepared physically and mentally for the rigours of the jungle.

Their gung-ho *esprit de corps* soon disintegrated. The heat was overpowering, the insects relentless. Their days consisted of marching in single file through thick vegetation, their nights were spent crouched in tents to escape the mosquitoes.

Almost immediately a rift developed between the sexes. The girls complained that the boys were selfish, the boys



Clockwise from left: Andy gulps fresh vine water, the boys take a break, vegetarian Hayley ponders parrot for dinner, Will in contemplative pose

said the girls were not pulling their weight. Everyone began to doubt Will's leadership.

After a few days, with the group running out of rations, the girls, both vegetarians, were horrified when the boys began to shoot parrots, tortoises and monkeys to supplement their staple of rice. For three weeks they were stranded on a riverbank.

By the time they reached civilisation, relationships had irretrievably broken down. While the boys went on to

complete the Inca Trail, the girls made their own way home. Now, nine months later, most of the group are barely in touch. So why did it all go so horribly wrong? This is what four of them told us:

Bruce Chapman, 23

"I met Will at a friend's party when he was busy planning the trip, carrying maps around and talking about it. At first everyone seemed to get very well, but that didn't last when we got

into the jungle. The mental slog involved in that part of the trip was terrible, you just kept going from day to day.

We were hoping to catch most of our food, but one of the guns broke immediately. Although the other one worked reasonably well, we ran out of cartridges on a number of occasions, so we went hungry. That was our biggest problem — we all lost a couple of stone.

The tensions increased once we were out of the jungle and on our way to Cuzco, along the Andes. Before, people had swept disagreements under the carpet, but when the conditions were no longer arduous, there was a general attitude of 'we can get away from each other, so we don't need to be nice to each other any more'.

"There was definitely a split between the five boys and Laura and Hayley. The tensions among the boys were transitory, they didn't cause any lasting animosity. But the split had nothing to do with sexism — it was to do with who

contributed and who didn't. We got on extremely well with Erin, the producer, because she pulled her weight. She also found it difficult getting on with the girls.

"Everyone found out about the trip through friends, apart from Laura who answered an advertisement in the paper. She was accepted very quickly because she had been at film school and Will wanted someone who knew how to use a camera. His vetting of her should have been more rigorous.

"The trip gave me the thinking space to consider the future. I had been heading towards a banking job but now I have decided to join the Army."

Andy Wager, 22

"We felt tensions pretty quickly once we were in the jungle. Our team spirit soon collapsed.

"Each person was supposed to carry their own water for the day. The girls were already carrying less equipment than us, but one day Laura turned to me after walking for three hours and said 'can I have some of your water?' I asked her if she had run out and she said 'I only brought a litre'. I completely blew my trust, refused to give her any water and told her she

was a detriment to the whole group.

"The girls were so irritating that by the time we came out of the jungle, I didn't want to have anything to do with them.

"The worst character clash was between me and Hayley. I found her despicable. She was so self-centred — she was the kind of person who could sit and talk about herself for hours and never ask you a single question.

"The only time Will failed was in not dealing with the situation with the girls earlier. By the time he tried to make us all be friends, everyone had made up their minds and wasn't prepared to change."

Hayley Pattison, 22

"There was a real air of optimism at the beginning. Will was very jolly-hockey-sticks. We realised it would be tough but the odd thing is, no one quite knew why.

"Being with the same people day in, day out is exhausting and also hugely isolating, even though you are never more than 50 yards from anyone. My diary from the first night is a cry of 'what am I doing here?'

"There were times when I had to use all my strength just to put my feet forward. Everyone became incredibly selfish and there was a massive boy-girl divide. The boys became competitive and masculine, they patronised Laura and I, calling us 'the girlsies'.

"If you hurt yourself, the attitude was 'come on, you're holding us up'. The boys would never admit they were suffering. Finally I thought 'fine, you do your Indiana Jones, I'll just get on with walking'. As for Will, he became totally self-absorbed.

"In hindsight, the trip was fantastic but I feel sad that we didn't co-ordinate as a group. I guess we were hostages to the jungle. You expect it to be paradise but actually it's just endless mud and dark green vines with no horizon."

Robert Sawyer, 27

"The sheer daily slog creates a selfishness — it was a 'sod the rest' experience. I remember Will had packets of sweets that he wouldn't share — I ended up nicking handfuls from his pack, then eating them alone in my tent.

"Generally the boys got on

Finding your man in New York

Manhattan chase ...

OVER THE rocket and shitake mushroom side-salad, their eyes met. "Hyacinth," said the tanned, dark-haired American boy, grappling with his companion's English name. "You are so sweet you make my teeth ache."

Yes, it's corny, but this is the sort of chat-up line English girls can expect if they decide to miss the "season" this year and head instead for Manhattan. I have not yet had personal experience of being courted by an Ameri-

can man — though in this city the possibility must probably not be discounted — but women friends who have been treated to the full, soppy effect of an American lad's come-to-bed gaze say that the process is irredeemably saccharine. They will cover you in blooms and call you "princess", but after a few days you may succumb to boredom.

Where to look? Manhattan's best, unofficial, singles bar — the concourse café at Grand Central Station, has just closed after a high rent demand. In its absence, the best hunting will probably be had at the fading Bowery Bar and the trendy Cub Room.

Manhattan in summer becomes unspeakably hot, so bring light clothes, cut your hair like Jennifer Aniston (of the prime-time comedy *Friends*), and wax those legs and armpits, too. For all their prattling about feminism, New York men do not share their continental-European counterparts' preference for hirsute

dames. Regular pedicures are also the norm here.

Clothes this summer are pastels, tight trousers, perhaps with bell-bottoms, bared tummies and shiny sandals with high heels. Nail varnish, though a tad tarty in Britain, is widely worn, both on fingers and toes. This year's shade is light blue.

The good parties are held at weekends, usually on Long Island, where you should find a man who has a rental-share on a house in the Hamptons, the sought-

after trio of villages on Long Island's south shore.

But do not be discouraged if he fails to pounce. Indeed, that may be left to you. Groping is no longer part of the repertoire of the male New Yorker, so

bullied has he been by the "cry rape" sisterhood. If he is going to pinch your bottom he will ask you beforehand — "Hyacinth, may I, without making any negative statement about you as a woman, place my palm on your posterior at this moment in time?"

The American man is earnest, talkative, and really rather sweet, though sometimes in need of justification. He will tell you about his fears, his thoughts and particularly about his therapist. Prepare yourself for lines such as "my therapist says I have a fear of commitment because I was not breast-fed". If he is serious, he will invite you home to meet his mum and leave you alone with her while he watches the baseball on television.

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Simon Gray on champagne, cigarettes — and being told he was dying

A dramatist who refused to take the final curtain

It is noon and the champagne is in the ice bucket, which Simon Gray regards as "the closest most of us get to happiness, after a certain age". We are in sunny Chichester, the morning after the first night of his new play, and his old friend Pinter has just rung to tell him to buy the paper in which the first of several glowing reviews appears.

The last time we talked, Gray and Pinter were not on speaking terms. Gray's comic portrayal of Pinter in the television film *Unnatural Pursuits* had resulted in a very public rift. So I was keen to discover how they had patched it up.

"I sent him a poem," Gray says, "which I had come across in *The Spectator*, called *Loss*. And Harold wrote back: 'I looked up the poem: a plaintive elegy by Beatrice Garland on the 'unquiet domain' of dismay, deeper than grief: 'dismay is private, unpromising and small... something darkish, bruised, spreading underground.'"

"Harold and I had been through six productions together, there was too much life lived together, too much shared experience for it to be a permanent rift." Pinter had come to Chichester and was "extremely courteous and complimentary" to Gray's director, Richard Wilson — who had played the caricature Pinter in the offending TV film.

At the end of that 1993 interview, the cheering prospect for Gray was his next new play, about George Blake and Sean Bourke. This was, of course, *Cell Mates* — and we all know what happened to *Cell Mates*. "When the history of the stage is written," Gray says with a mordant laugh, "it will have become the most famous play I ever wrote."

Five years of work dissolved with Stephen Fry's recorded telephone message: "I'm sorry, I'm so very sorry." The aftermath meant redirecting the play with Simon Ward, tears in the dressing room. Gray's physical and mental exhaustion, and the closure of a play killed off by a fatal contamination.

Gray exorcised the demons by publishing his account of it in a book, *Far Chance* — "an agony to write" but a masterpiece, managing, despite the rage, rancour and desire for revenge, to be charming, funny, full of dramatic suspense and — in attempting to understand Fry — generous and humane. There had been "so much merriment" in the production.

A traumatic year has passed since then. Gray went into a clinic to sort out his bad back and to dry out, and was told he had terminal cancer, with between six months and two years to live. "Not only was I told that I was going to die, but

THE VALERIE GROVE INTERVIEW



subsequently I did nearly die. Of pneumonia, which I picked up in the hospital while they were doing their enthusiastic foraging for cancer. I suppose you could call it droll."

He had been told the worst by a doctor "who could not resist being the bringer of bad news". On five consecutive mornings they told him the cancer was not what they had hypothesised, but a more lethal one. What did he feel? (Not such a fatuous question; a friend once told me that when her cancer was diagnosed she felt a perverse onrush of happiness.) "Misery. Real misery. It made me realise I am very keen to live. I didn't want my life to be taken away from me. I thought 'so young, my Lord, and dead.'"

"I couldn't have done a Potter. Potter did it his way. If the reprieve had not come, I would simply have curled up quietly. I hope, in a nest of love, with my loved ones around."

Instead, the reprieve came: the doctors had got it wrong, he only had a couple of aneurysms in chest and abdomen. Until the pneumonia. "I had a temperature of 107 for eight days. Poor Victoria," Victoria Rothschild, with whom he lives, thought she would be widowed before they got round to marrying. "If I were in America I'd sue the hell out of the hospital. But here, if I named them, they'd probably sue the hell out of me." He has to go back soon to have the aneurysms patched up; not surprisingly, "I've developed absolute hospital phobia".

The good news is that he looks extremely well in his lofty, shambolic way, and has flung himself into work. *Simply Disconnected* is the sequel to his wonderful 1975 play *Otherwise Engaged*, with the same star, Alan Bates, playing the detached Simon Hench who, 21 years on (Gray keeps saying 25 years; he is hopeless about dates), again has his solitude interrupted by brother, old school friend, parasite hanger-on, etc.

For the first time, Gray kept away from rehearsals; he marvelled that the director Richard Wilson, who had never seen *Otherwise Engaged*, rang

him only three times for advice, and "Harold and I both think this is Alan's greatest performance". So Chichester has been a happy interlude: he had been to the beach at Hayling Island to look for the house he grew up in, "which has, of course, gone. It was called Mallows — which sounds like the setting for an Agatha Christie."

He has also finished a new novel, and a play called *Who Me?* about his father, who died in his seventies "of aneurysms, so I suppose it's genetic". The BBC asked him to dramatise *Far Chance* (even suggesting that Fry and Mayall might play themselves) but Gray decided he couldn't go back over that painful story again. Instead he is dramatising the story of Julian Hough, Patrick Barlow's partner in the National Theatre of Brent, which was on the verge of great success when, on two occasions, Julian "did a Stephen Fry" and walked out.

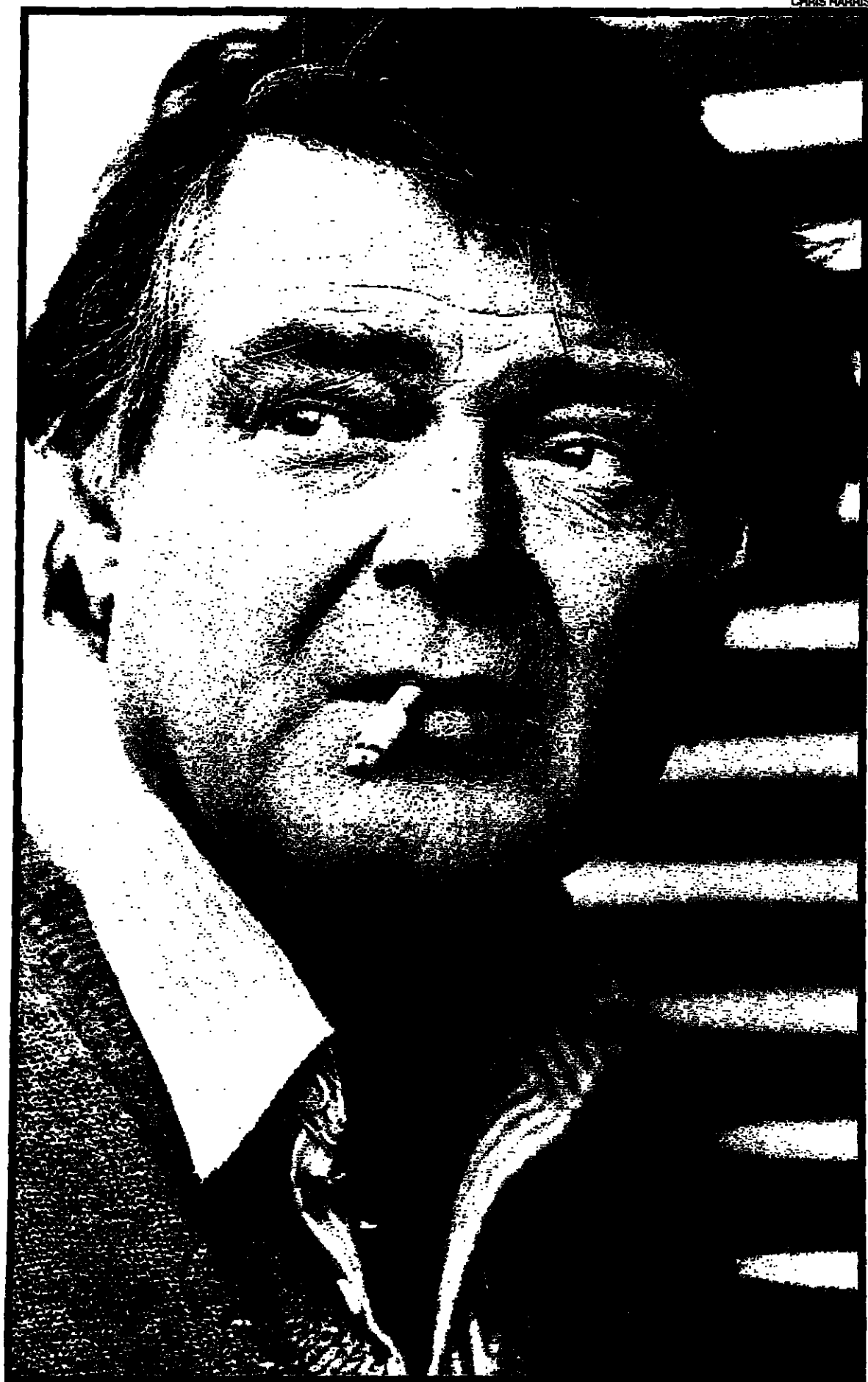
Julian happened to be the son of Gray's old Cambridge tutor Graham Hough. Julian died, jaywalking on the Guildford bypass — so smashed up he was identifiable only by his fingerprints. "I felt I could do this story," Gray says, "because I hadn't been involved in it."

There are many endearing things about Simon Gray: his Eeyorish pessimism followed by laughter; the way he says "If you print this I will kill you" before spilling a riveting confidence; and his reckless addiction, even after the brush with death, to champagne and to Silk Cut, which he buys by the carton.

But he can't still be getting through 60 a day, surely? "Oh yes. And I loathe them. I find them revolting, really revolting. I wake in the morning and think, why do I do this? In two minutes I will feel foul." But as he wrote ten years ago, when he asked Pinter's advice about giving up, Harold told him not to bother yet: "You've got a few years of smoking left in you."

He rang his doctor about a prescription for Nicorette gum and was told he must come in and "sit about for hours in a germ-and-baby filled waiting room," which made him so irritated he smoked even more. Soon he was chewing Nicorettes and smoking at the same time, and even the memory of the gum makes him gag.

Nobody knows more, or writes better, than Gray about the destructive forces in life. There is as much drama in the accounts he writes of seeing plays into production as in his plays — with himself as the fall guy. A Simon Gray day — never more graphically depicted than in his television film



Gray. Silk Cut drooping: he is permanently seething, boiling, fulminating, composing outraged letters

Running Late — would feature a taxi driver who loses his way, unwanted callers, lost door-keys, jinxed machinery, roads blocked by demonstrations, cancelled trains. If he ever drove a car, he would be clamped. Or towed away every day.

The first time I met Gray he was still teaching English literature at Queen Mary College — "where I started as a mere lecturer and ended up, 20 teaching years later, as a mere lecturer" — toiling in to the East End from his home in sylvan Highgate every day on the North-

ern Line. He became a key figure (hunched, intense, ironical) in the battle to foil a local road-widening scheme.

When in Los Angeles for a production of *The Common Pursuit* (recorded in his book, *How's That for Telling 'Em, Fat Lady?* and memorably portrayed by his doppelgänger Alan Bates) he can't hire a video without showing a driver's licence; a receptionist he asks to call a cab thinks he wants to call a car ("I wanted to smash his Woody Allen smile") and he is menaced by a rollerskater. He is permanently seething, boiling, fulminating, composing outraged letters to airlines about not getting an aisle seat or to restaurants about not getting a booth table. And constantly being asked not to smoke.

Only last night he had been to a restaurant which had a notice: "We would prefer you not to smoke." Red rag to bull. "So I lit up, and when they pointed out the notice, I told them, 'I prefer to smoke.' I hope he never does become serene or sober or abandons what he calls his "controlled paranoia", and that his sixtieth birthday in October finds him with a West End first night, awash with champagne.

Pass me a man-sized hanky

Real men don't cry for Bambi, says Giles Coren

Five in every hundred men who watched Mel Gibson paint his face blue and cry "Freedom!" in *Braveheart* burst into tears. Women, for the most part, were unmoved. We also outwep the ladies in *Schindler's List*, *The Elephant Man*, *Philadelphia* and *Forrest Gump*.

Have we gone mad? Have we forgotten that a man should offer only a dry shoulder to the helpless blubbing of his fair companion? Not quite. It is just a question of which film twists your stopcock and according to an invaluable survey of Britain's cinema-going habits, compiled by Microsoft, those films differ between the sexes.

In *Ghost*, you see, it was the birds who blubbed, whereas only half as many blokes broke down. In the awful Bette Midler schlockfest, *Beaches*, ten times as many women cried, a pattern repeated in *Four Weddings, Sense and Sensibility* and *The Lion King*.

These figures prove conclusively, as figures always do, that men cry about friendships between men and the happy(fish) resolution of violence. Women cry about romantic love and dead cartoon animals.

You will never find a man crying over *Sleepless in Seattle* or *Doctor Zhivago*. But put him in front of *The Shawshank Redemption* at the point when Morgan Freeman and Tim Robbins unite on the beach, or *The Natural* when Robert Redford hits the last home run, and dive for dry land.

While women may cry for Bambi's dead mother, men will cry in *The Deer Hunter*, not for the slaughtered cervine but for the tragic reunion of the hunters, Christopher Walken and Robert De Niro. But 8 per cent of men, according to the survey, never cry in films at all. Pah! I would like to see them dry-eyed when Rocky finally throws his arms around Apollo Creed and they sob together: "Ain't gonna be no rematch. Ain't gonna be no rematch."

And what about the bit in *Escape To Victory* when Michael Caine's team of footballing POWs refuse to escape at halftime through a tunnel in their changing room but go back on the pitch to show their German captors a thing or two about British football? No man could hold himself together. When Pete does that bicycle kick from the edge of the box to make it 4-4 in the dying seconds, even as the crowd are invading the pitch to smuggle the players to freedom under their coats...

So, if you want to impress a woman with your ur-male credibility, go and see *Brief Encounter* or *Love Story* or *Terms of Endearment*. But for God's sake, don't take her to a weepy.

I just wanted to smash his Woody Allen smile

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Philip Howard



■ When Gaullists were Gauls and Britons were woad, we had a visitor

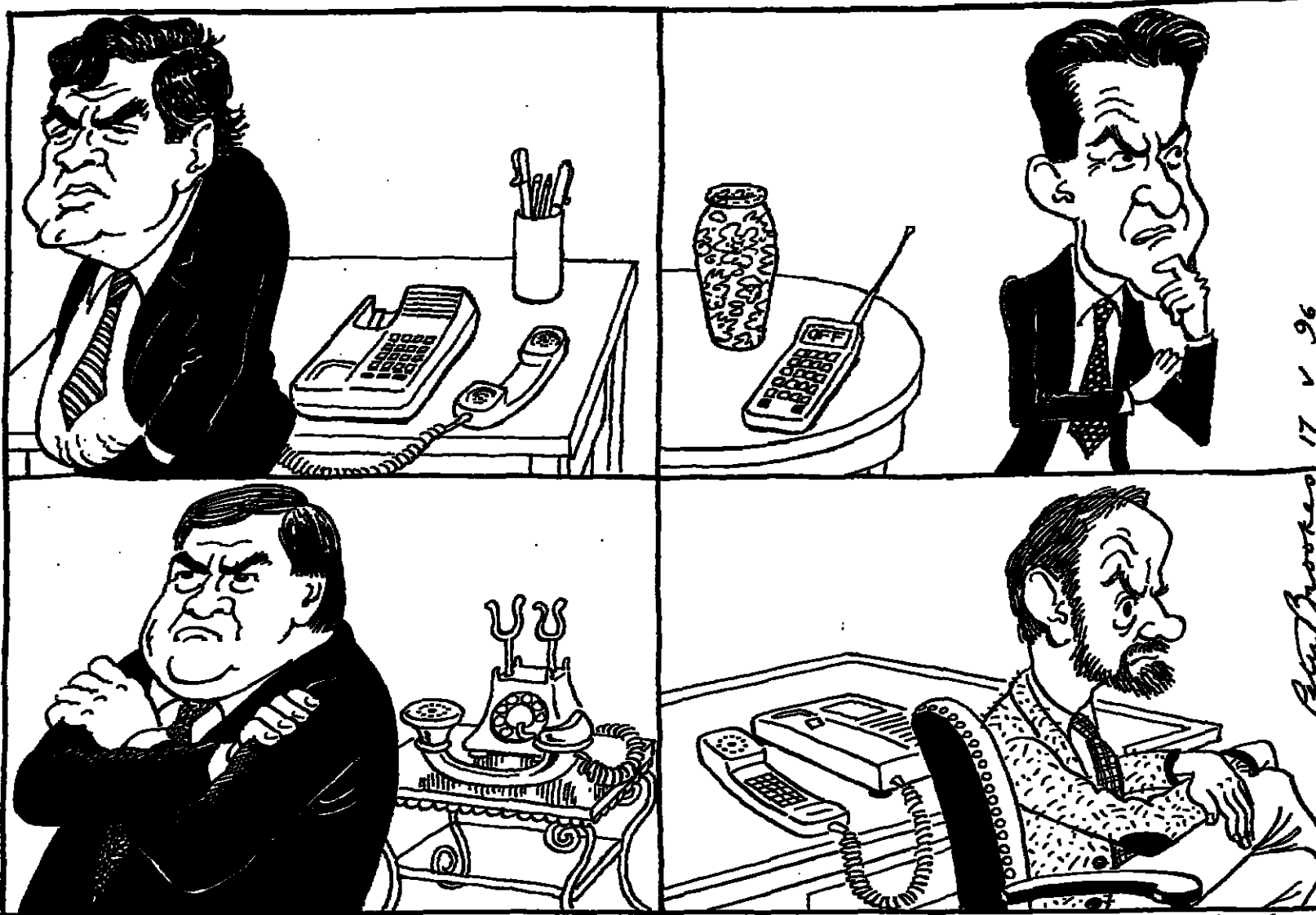
Monsieur le Président Chirac is visiting Britain to rediscover the magic potion *l'entente très cordiale*. Accompanied by Astérix, his Ministre des Calambours, he has been feasted *à la nautique* on the native dish of Vache Folle Anglaise with Brussels sprouts, and has addressed both Houses of Druids in their Menhir Circle. But every time he opens his mouth, the Druids wail the song at the top of the Bardic charts: "Ooox. Aaxx. vive the world's greatest Gaul, Eric Cantonax." Chirac is finding this puzzling because he never believed that the Roman game of kicking the boulder would catch on in this island, where they have to carry little portable roofs to stop the sky from falling on their heads. For the climate does not favour a level playing-field to encourage the Gallic skills of boulder-control. And in any case he prefers David Ginola, the other Gaul who has been engaged to teach the Britons to kick the boulder at Pons Aelius (Newcastle), a frontier fort.

Tempered by *Toujours Provan*, a Gallic bestseller about the good life in the garden suburb of Glasgow called Provan, Chirac has crossed the Wall to visit the Picts. The Prince Mykingdomforan, acts as his interpreter to the gang leaders, C.U. Jimmex and Wee Gorbalex. On his marchabout the Easterhouses, the Picts wave their Saltires and offer him their native dish of Haggis (Intestins Foux Ecossais or Panse de Brebis Farcié) — a sausage of whose existence he had first heard from the Paris correspondent of *Temporun*. So Chirac addresses the Picts: "Messieurs les Pictes. We cannot build Europe without you. As great tribes, we must each retain our native traditions. For us Gauls, as your *Sol* tablet knows, our favourite dish is wild boar garnished with frogs' legs. You on the other hand, worship both your boars and your bores, often in the same person. You allow Euro-bores of all sorts to monopolise your forum. As we say in Gaul, *chacun a son goût* or Bill Cashot can give you goat. So we shall continue to roast our boars. Your religion lets them bore you to death. As they say, *Major e longinquo reverentia*: or, John Major looks better from a great distance, just as I appreciate your bagpipes best from a long way off."

"Since the *Pactum Romanum*, Britain has been a reluctant province with a revolting tendency. If it was not your Queen Boadicea then it was Queen Maggie, whom Druids worship as a reincarnation of Boadicea. Your island is a breeding-ground for would-be Emperors. Clodius Albinus had a go. Septimius Severus defeated his barny army at Lyons. Then you had the notion of an independent Britannia within the Empire Union or E.U. Carausius, admiral of the Channel Fleet (R.N.), proclaimed himself Emperor. Allectus murdered him and took over the role of Tribal Xenophobe and Demagogue. "Aut Caesar aut nihil (Independence or nothing). *Referenda* are *Britannia*. But Rome did not forget or forgive. Constantine Chlorus, the pale one and an ancestor of Helmut Kohl, brought his legions over to reclaim the province. But Britannia did not forget either. Magnus Maximus, a superlative of John Major, was at it again in 383. Read all about it in Kipling's *Centurion of the XXXth*. He set himself up as Emperor in Britannia and dreamt up a new protocol. He crossed the Manche and took over Gallia and Iberia after defeating Commissioner Gratian. But he was killed, and Britain was back in the E.U."

"Then the Rhine froze and the barbarians made inroads again. So you Brits declared your own independent Presidents of the E.U.: Marcus, Gratian and Constantine III. But Constantine took your army to Gallia, and neither he nor it came back. So then your Druids wrote to Honorius, Emperor of the West, and said please send an EU task-force, we want back in. And the President said: 'I am too busy. *Alex jacta est*. Die of cold (3-4-ice cube, *mes braves*). But you kept appealing to Rome, lastly to Aetius in the 470s. But Europe would not be half as much fun without you and your let's leave, let's stay, thumbs up/down to Rome."

"Why's the old fellow blithering wind and piss?" said C.U. Jimmex. "Away like your head," said Wee Gorbalex. "But at least he doesn't speak English."



IT'S GOOD TO TALK....

BT

It's those bricks again

Carl Andre's minimalist installations are taken as seriously by critics as they were 20 years ago — but are they art?

A cutting from a copy of *The Times* lies before me. It is one of my columns. I stare at it, hardly believing my eyes. Alas, it is real: would that it might go back to where it came from, but I know it won't. For it was written and published 20 years ago almost to the week, when my hair was a dark brown and I could dash down the stairs without holding the banisters. (chabod! chabod!)

Come come, Levin, what's all this maudlin talk? What is that particular column among the hundreds — the thousands — that you have written? I shall tell you. It is particular because it has come back to haunt me, with what I wrote about those years ago and which I am now obliged to write again. Is there anyone reading this whose memory is sufficiently stirred when he or she reads the headline: "Art may come and art may go, but a brick is a brick for ever."

You see in 1976, an American sculptor, Carl Andre by name, was given space in the Tate Gallery to put down one of his own figures. (That admirable practice continues. I am happy to say.) But when Mr Andre was invited to put down his figure, it was seen to be no figure to rival Praxiteles, Donatello, Grinling Gibbons, Canova, Rodin, Picasso and Henry Moore. Far from it: for his imperishable masterpiece he had put down two rows of perfectly ordinary builder's bricks, ten by six on two layers, and nothing else at all.

Whereupon merry hell broke out. And, as you would expect, I took upon myself the entire burden of making the explosion bigger, noisier, angrier and generally whoopier. Throughout, when I felt that the uproar might be waning, I shoved in my own again, and in no time there was more blood on the pavement. I give you a sample.

A pile of bricks is a pile of bricks, and as soon as the curtain went up... I read these words: "It must be remembered that for at least a hundred years now every new form of art has been ridiculed and labelled folly." This is an example — indeed, it is one of the finest specimens I have ever begged — of the fallacy of the Undistributed Middle, which is to be found in the first chapter of any book on elementary logic, normally in this form:

All oaks are trees. All elms are trees. Therefore all oaks are elms."

For it is not only great but disturbingly original work that is called rubbish: it is also rubbish. And it is not only new artistic forms that are ridiculed; it is also piles of bricks.

And now Mr Andre, after 20 years spent ignoring Britain, has brought us a brand-new show. And in his brand-new show — he has chosen Oxford for it — he has given us once again an enormous lot of bricks — bricks entirely indistinguishable from the old bricks, or indeed any ordinary bricks at all. How's that for 20 years of perseverance?

Now I must reveal that this time the man on the ladder has given us something as well as bricks. There are, for instance, a couple of dozen chunks of wood, all of roughly the same size, shape, material (cedar I think) and position. There is a rather more shaped figure which reminds one a little — only a little — of America's electric chair. There is also a long copper band (I think it is copper) which snakes about the gallery for many yards.

At this point, I can almost hear Mr Richard Cork (the *Times* art critic) bursting at the seams, and the sharpening of hatchets can be heard far away. Because I have to say now, about Mr Carl Andre, that although he is obviously not a charlatan, what he is an artist of quite extraordinary small talent. And when I say this, it is impossible for me not to challenge some of Mr Cork's strongest beliefs about Mr Andre's work. For you see, Mr Cork wrote a very substantial article, published here on May 7 this year, in which he showed that he believes that Mr Andre is of great talent.

As it happens, the first clue to my scepticism has been given to me on a plate by Mr Andre. His — well let them be called his objects — all have names, and I offer a random selection of them, viz:

7 Cu Slant 30
6 Metal Fugue (for Mendeleev)
Thirty-ninth Copper Cardinal
Lead Secret Work

Twenty-fifth Copper Cardinal
Sand-Lime Instar
Henge on 3 Right Thresholds
Manet 8 Fathoms
Ladder No 2
Equivalent 8

I have to say, even if it makes Mr Cork groan, that although I remain certain that Mr Andre is not a charlatan, I do have to grit my teeth against believing that he is.

But upstairs, there is more, and it is what you and I would call somewhat overdone. As we come up into the upstairs gallery, we see that almost half of the space (and it is a very considerable space) is laid by tiles, rather than ones. All the tiles are the same size and shape, which is square, and all the tiles touch their neighbours exactly. And so the entire floor consists of square tiles a foot across — to be precise, one thousand two hundred and ninety six of them. Although the tiles are the same shape and size, they change patches in different colours, though no odd one is to be found, or indeed even a few; huge sections are the rule. It is notable that there are no bright colours in this sea of squares: indeed, the entire gallery offers very few objects that anyone would like to dance to. (There is one exception to this mournful parade, which I shall come to anon.)

Now, as I never stop pointing out, art in all its forms can be shaken or stirred, or indeed both at once. The fact that I think Mr Andre's work is of no account — nay, is more or less trivial and even silly — doesn't matter, not least because Mr Cork is at my elbow to tell me that Mr Andre's work is of high quality. (Though I cannot refrain from twitching when I read Mr Cork's "Andre uses his clusters of bricks to make cuts in space, thereby turning the floor they

occupy into an integral part of the sculpture.")

We all know that it is almost impossible to make sense of the blubs that accompany art exhibitions, and Carl Andre has opened the floodgates this time. Try this bit from Waldemar Januszczak: "Andre is unique among minimalist artists in striving for a poetic melancholy. He thinks with his heart and remembers with his feet. All his floor pieces are made to be walked over. They set out to remind you what it was like to scamper across things."

And what about Richard Dornett? "Implicit in that title [*Equivalents*] is the idea that a cloud is the visible equivalent of a certain amount of condensed water. But more than this, in its own mysterious way, a photograph of a cloud can also be considered an equivalent of the cloud itself. In other words, without sharing any of its physical properties, a work of art can be the equivalent of a natural phenomenon." (Many years ago Beauchamp — J.B. Morton — played a wicked trick on people who were babbling about a painting without really knowing anything about it. Beauchamp wrote two blurbs, one straightforward and one made of complete gibberish; then he offered them both and asked which was which. Roughly half got it wrong.)

But that, surely, is the glory of this business. And it comes in two forms. Go to Venice and stand before the great Titian *Assumption* in the Frari; you will need no blurb, not even a sensible one. Then, only a few pages away, you will see a figure by Canova. This time you will ponder: was he a great artist, or was he something to shudder at? No matter, a healthy argument is worth a few cups of coffee, and vice versa.

But here is Carl Andre, and you instantly know that there is no argument. Or rather, there is an argument, but it is far too trivial to waste time, effort and absurdity on.

Let him play with his bricks: may he never drop one on his toe. But before I go, let me salute him for one thing in his dreary world. In one corner of the gallery, Andre has put a huge, splendid, bit of — well, I would call it Lego — in lovely light wood, standing some six feet high. It is egg-shaped, and worth all of Andre's serious work. Chuck it, Andre, and make things like that. And then the Oxford gallery will be crowded, instead of having five people in it, as it did when I went.

Bernard Levin

Tears indeed

ONE of the country's top vegetable growers has lost the prize onions which were to have been the centrepiece of his exhibit at the Chelsea Flower Show. They have been eaten.

The onions, grown by Chelsea gold medal winner Arthur Davies and each weighing more than 2lb, had been placed carefully in cold storage at his local pub in Powys to ensure that they were in mint condition for the show, which opens next week. Unfortunately, one of the kitchen staff at the Talgarth Inn chopped them up and popped them into the pub's lasagne.

Davies has won 84 national gold medals for his vegetables, and had been commissioned to grow the onions for the Ipswich seed firm Thompson & Morgan. "They got better care than the wife over the ten months I grew them," he said yesterday. "One of them reached the size of a melon. It was a beauty. I'll bring the one onion that wasn't eaten to the show, but it's a very poor specimen."

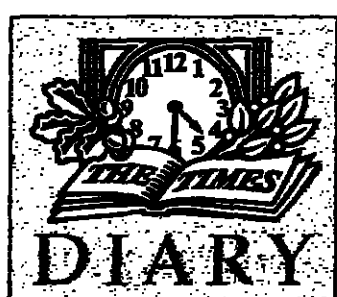
The pub is contrite and has been offering Davies free drinks as consolation. "It's very unfortunate," says the manager, Peter Lawson. "They were so big that

they went a very long way. But I can assure you that they tasted very good."

● *Jude*, the new film based on Thomas Hardy's *Obscure* novel, has been sold to every commercial territory but one: Germany. The problem is the film-makers' modish abbreviation of Hardy's original title, which will need to be changed for the German market. To plaster cinemas with the stark



"It's a very rare haggis from a cow's stomach, M Chirac"



name "Jude", which means "Jew" in German, would, it is felt, be a little insensitive.

Swagger on

WHEN not hurling money at his Referendum Party, Sir James Goldsmith likes nothing more than big family parties. Officially, last night's party, held at Montez, a nightclub in Knightsbridge where sheikhs rattle and roll, was to celebrate the 42nd birthday of Goldsmith's oldest daughter, Isabel. But the news that another of the guests, Jemima Khan, is pregnant added a springtime fizz to proceedings.

Isabel, Goldsmith's daughter by his first wife, has a boyfriend some 20 years her junior. More than 100 of the usual suspects — Rothschilds, Aspinalls, Fortes and Thatchers — turned up,

sniffing around the thousands of pounds worth of floral explosions. There is no doubt about it. The man would bring a definite strut to Downing Street.

Stinky wicket

IAN BOTHAM and Alan Lamb may have pulled up their stumps, but Jokers in the pavilion still abound. Yorkshire's Alex Morris comes high on the list — he snuffed a smelly fish down one of his team-mates' pads in the match against Derbyshire last weekend.

The England and Yorkshire all-rounder Darren Gough takes up the story: "Alex Morris quietly

slipped a very old bit of mackerel inside Anthony McGrath's pads at Sheffield. Anthony spent some time trying to find out where the awful smell was coming from, particularly as it got onto his clothes."

Yorkshire pud

SIR BERNARD INGHAM'S famous hangdog expression may well be explained by his penchant for a curious nettle-based pudding. This Sunday, Margaret Thatcher's former press secretary will toddle off to his native Yorkshire and, to the triumphal fanfare of a local brass band, judge the World Dock Pudding Championship.

The dock plant used is a relation of those used to cure a nettle's sting. Mixed in with nettles, oatmeal and onions, and boiled thoroughly, they become Sir Bernard's favourite dish. "I find it impossible to describe," he gushes on Radio 4's *Going Places*. "For me, it's ambrosia and there's something Elysian about eating perfectly made dock pudding."

Sock shock

WHILE the middle-aged model Jerry Hall removes her clothes for the latest *Vogue*, her catwalk contemporary Marie Helvin has de-



Marie: well padded

veloped a new trick to impress the public. She has taken to wearing rugby socks inside her bra to give her some lift.

Compliments on her beauty at the opening of Bruce Oldfield's new shop in Mayfair on Wednesday night were answered directly with the story of the socks. "I don't know what team they represent, but they're red and green if that's any help," she said. "... And no, I'm not going to pull them out to show you."

P-H-S

Why child benefit is special

New Labour's row is really very old, says Paul Barker

If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen. But of all the current Labour Party jostlings in the back-porch of power, the row about child benefit is the real division. Child benefit has become the test of a commitment to social justice. Children are our future. How could a party that endangers their wellbeing call itself a party of reform?

Despite occasional murmurings, the Conservatives have left child benefit in place. But the Shadow Chancellor, Gordon Brown, has now said that one way for Labour to save money would be to scrap the payments to the mothers of older children. Frank Field, the Labour chairman of the Commons Social Security Select Committee, has emerged as one of his most vocal opponents. He says this will undercut the finances of working mothers (often part-timers) and their families.

The history of child benefit, and Frank Field's role in that history, explains why it has (rightly) become such a rallying cry. (It is also a useful and legitimate focus for Labour MPs unhappy with the leadership.) The point about child benefit is that just about 100 per cent of the seven million mothers entitled to it take their books to the post office and collect it. The money goes where it should. If a few rich mothers receive child benefit they don't need, this is a small price to pay. (It is probably cheaper than the administrative cost of a more complex system. If fiscal pressures demanded it, the best way to get the money back would be through PAYE.)

Labour's agonising over this precisely matches the tussle over the introduction of child benefit in the first place under the last Labour administration. It is evidence of how a Blair government might shape up under the pressures of office.

Twenty years ago, Frank Field was the Director of the Child Poverty Action Group. I was editor of the social affairs weekly, *New Society*. Together we became locked into the battle to save child benefit from strangulation at birth — by a Labour Prime Minister. To achieve victory, we broke all the polite rules.

In April 1976, James Callaghan succeeded Harold Wilson. He immediately sacked the radical Social Services Secretary, Barbara Castle, who had carried the Child Benefit Act into law. On May 25, 1976, her pallid successor, David Ennals, rose in the Commons to say that child benefit would not now be introduced for at least three years. This sounded like a shadowy way of saying never.

Field rang me. There was someone he thought I should see. Could they come to my office? When Field arrived, he was coldly furious. So was his companion, whom I did not then know. He had given Field a wad of photocopies. They were photocopies of Cabinet minutes, which showed how this shabby decision was reached.

The Treasury — with Denis Healey, the Chancellor, in the Gordon Brown part — had counter-attacked over the cost. Callaghan had his own doubts. It meant a fiscal shift from men (who gained most from the existing child tax allowances) to women. Trade unionists weren't keen. Callaghan was vulnerable to union pressures. The abandonment was agreed. Cabinet then concentrated on how Ennals could "sell" the sell-out.

Field asked if I would run an article based on the minutes. I said I would. On June 17, 1976, it appeared in *New Society* under the heading, "Killing a commitment: The Cabinet v the children."

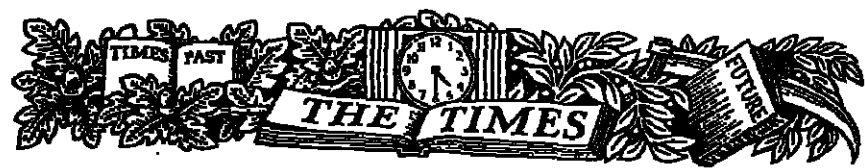
To avoid cold feet, I didn't tell my publishers about it until the issue was being distributed. Everything in the office that might help inquiries was burnt, or flushed down the women's lavatory by my secretary. (I could tell Scotland Yard, correctly, that I had nothing it would be interested in.) When early copies reached London, Field took a bundle to the Commons and made sure they were well distributed. This all breached the byzantine rules of British governmental life. It broke the Official Secrets Act. It offended against the rules of the parliamentary journalists' lobby (to which *New Society* had the freedom of not belonging). But it worked. Child benefit was introduced after all.

It is rare, in my experience, for an article to have such a direct effect. As Field had shrewdly planned, there were acres of follow-up coverage. The Commons promptly held two debates: one on what the revelations meant for social security policy, the other on the breach of official secrecy. Our informant was, I am glad to say, undiscovered by the mole-hunters. We run into each other from time to time and exchange a quiet smile. The invention of the photocopy is the only step towards open government that has happened in my lifetime.

Child benefit became, and has remained, the yardstick of government (or opposition) concern for the family. At the time, I thought we had also increased the chances of a Freedom of Information Act. Field's article asked: "What would the Prime Minister's, the Chancellor's and their colleagues' reactions have been if they had known they were going to be individually accountable for what was said in Cabinet? Is it another argument for more open government? After all, this is another of Labour's election pledges."

He and I were involved in helping to produce a draft Information Bill. With Liberal support, it was making progress when the Callaghan Government collapsed. Such a law is again part of Labour's package of commitments. Will it withstand the heat of office? The waverings over child benefit may, unfortunately, give us a hint.

هكذا من الامم



THE WRONG STEP

A troubling message to those in Ulster who trust democracy

In choosing a Dublin newspaper to unveil the latest development in his Northern Ireland policy yesterday, the Prime Minister saw to it that his article dropped onto the doormats of only a few thousand British citizens. But the readership John Major wished to reach was even smaller than that. The Prime Minister's article in *The Irish Times* was addressed to the leadership of the Irish republican movement and intended to encourage a new IRA ceasefire. His efforts to end republican violence are understandable but the wisdom of his current approach must be questioned.

In the immediate aftermath of the Docklands bomb both the British and the Irish Governments maintained that progress in Ulster would not be stopped. The IRA's decision was tragic, it was argued, but Sinn Féin would be the losers: republicans, by choosing violence, had excluded themselves from negotiations and any influence over new political structures in Ulster.

In reality, both London and Dublin have danced to the republican flute. They have placed courting the IRA above attempting to make progress without it. Fergus Finlay, right-hand man to the Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring, declared that talks without Sinn Féin would "not be worth a penny candle" and, at a stroke, revealed that Dublin believed the republicans had an effective veto on progress. Last month Mr Spring unveiled plans to deal with the decommissioning of terrorist weapons separately from, rather than before, political talks. He believed that was the minimum necessary adjustment to ensure that there was another IRA ceasefire. He was, however, conceding another point to the republicans and providing ammunition to those within the IRA who argue that the armed struggle gets results.

Mr Major's article can be interpreted

ambiguously but his aim seems clear. Without going so far as to endorse Mr Spring's plan, the Prime Minister is signalling to Sinn Féin that decommissioning can be finessed if a new ceasefire is called. Taken along with the transfer of the IRA terrorist Patrick Kelly to an Irish jail and British Government support for the Irish language in Belfast, the article is the most significant part of a campaign to court republicans. Security sources believe the republican leadership is engaged in intense debate on its next move and the Government hopes it can nudge the IRA to a new ceasefire.

Mr Major's approach is fraught with difficulties. All the attempts by London and Dublin to address republican concerns only reinforce the impression that IRA violence drives political developments. Republicans can afford to look cynically at any suggestion that they are locking themselves out if they do not call a ceasefire before talks begin on June 10. They know that they can call a ceasefire at any time, enter talks without giving up a bullet and reserve the capacity to return to violence. Dublin officials argue that once in talks it will be hard for republicans to bomb again. But, given what they have gained by the bomb, republicans will feel little compunction in resuming slaughter if their goals are not met.

Mr Major's efforts may very well not lead to any ceasefire. If there is one, it is certain to be tactical. But while he makes his overtures to the IRA, his own party grows restive and the representatives of the democratic majority in Northern Ireland grow suspicious. It is to the credit of the Ulster Unionist leader David Trimble that he has reacted cautiously to Mr Major's words. His community requires reassurance from the Government. Those who place their faith in democracy should not be made to feel that those who subvert it are in control.

THE FULL-TIME CANDIDATE

Dole's decision is dangerous but a good risk

The pundits of Washington DC have been shocked by the departure from the Senate of Bob Dole. All their varying interests were fixed on the failure of his presidential campaign: right-wing Republicans enjoyed themselves attacking his moderation while Democrats gloried in President Clinton's lead in the polls. Few expected so dramatic a move by Mr Dole to pull himself out of the mire.

For a Senate majority leader of Mr Dole's standing to leave his power base brings high risks for the possibility of his high returns. If the basis on which he has made his gamble proves sound, then the decision could be the turning point of the whole campaign. If not, he can content himself that he went down with guns blazing.

Dole campaigners made three assumptions. They believed that the Washington perception of his candidacy as stuck in a rut was both accurate and becoming more so. They decided that there was little point in relinquishing his post as majority leader while remaining in the Senate: he had either to run from his position or stand outside. Finally, the Republicans accepted that they could not frame the contest in the manner that they wanted as matters stood. If the election was a referendum on Mr Clinton or Mr Dole as public personalities, or liberalism and conservatism as political philosophies, their man could win. On the other hand, if it was cast as a popularity contest between Mr Clinton and the Republican Congress dominated by Newt Gingrich, then the President was a solid prospect for re-election.

Mr Dole appears to have wagered that his dramatic exit from the Senate would not be seen as an act of desperation; that it would seize the popular imagination and restore

purpose and enthusiasm to his campaign. Despite his impoverished campaign finances and laws which prevent him raising more money until after the Republican national convention in August, he hopes he can use media interest and money from other sources to run a professional performance over the next three months. This is perhaps the biggest risk in his repertoire. He then needs to make personal character the central theme of the contest. He must hope that his natural advantages on this score will be helped by his willingness to lay down a much-loved office and the dignified manner in which he did so. He badly needs to revive at least some part of the conservative Republican support and attract those otherwise enticed by Ross Perot. Otherwise, it may prove impossible for him to escape association with Mr Gingrich and Capitol Hill.

Mr Dole now leaves Washington much earlier than expected. He has chosen his preferred means and field of battle. He will take his case to the American people. Some argue that his cause is doomed because he looks such a poor campaigner when compared with the President. This may prove true but it presumes that the slick will always triumph over the sincere. Mr Dole is not an inspiring speaker, although he was effective in his announcement on Wednesday. He does, however, have the type of compelling personal story — poverty, adversity, heroism — which voters like. He has been an accomplished leader in the Senate. In his own inarticulate way he stands for the tenets of American conservatism. His audacious move may come to nothing or even be seen in retrospect as mistaken. But it demonstrates that he has at least some of the right stuff to be President.

FAIR EXCHANGES

Feed your French friend well: he may become President

It was 46 years since they last met but time, it seemed, had only deepened the warmth of their greeting. When Jacques Chirac saw John King at Buckingham Palace on Wednesday, the two men returned immediately to their boyhood — to the time when, as tongue-tied teenagers, they played tennis, explored the postwar austerity of Paris and Rochester and stumbled through each other's languages during their summer exchanges.

Britain owes a debt to the King family: their warm reception of the French lad may have left lasting legacies. The boy who became his country's President never forgot his English, the Tyneside visit by King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, and the island to which he was to return in splendour half a century later.

It could have been so disastrously different. How many hundreds of families breathe a massive sigh of relief after the summer exchange and swear never again? The horror stories pass into family folklore: the time that Nicole slipped away after the picnic and was found, hours later, in the Dog and Fox surrounded by lascivious likely lads; Sarah's bewilderment at being thrust into a family evening of fast-talking Parisian aunts and uncles; Luc's insistence that all English food was *dégoûtante*; and Andrew's boredom at finding no discos, no pubs and no girls who spoke English in the remote Brittany village.

Children grow up, but the anti-French or

anti-British prejudice formed at 15 can be just as strong 30 years later. So both the French and the British have an interest in promoting happy exchanges. There is much they cannot control: the weather, the food, the homesickness, the tendency of teenagers to be surly and withdrawn or determined to have as much fun as possible with the opposite sex. But local authorities, teachers and town twinning officials can do much to match families, neighbourhoods, schools and pupils with tact and common sense.

Anglo-French exchanges are the most intensive in Europe, with about 250,000 pupils of each country spending time in the other each year. This is far more than the numbers going to Germany, despite the money and effort spent by Bonn to lure young people there. The reason, of course, is language: English remains overwhelmingly the first foreign language in France and French — though it might be hard to guess from results — is the only language that Britons make any effort to learn.

Numbers have fallen in the past year. But John Major and President Chirac promised to reverse the fall by announcing new school partnerships for which the Government is ready to contribute £1 million over the next four years. The message for all those British families dreading the arrival of the young DuPont boy this summer is: make an effort, feed him well, keep him happy: for in 40 years' time you may find your hospitality repaid in the Elysée.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Regulator's proposals and their effects on British Gas

From Mr A. J. Perry

Sir, Simon Jenkins (article, May 15) highlights that the regulators of the privatised utilities are accountable to no one. That was the essence of the structure: they were not to be subject to (overt) political direction, but only to generalised duties set out in the privatisation Acts.

There may have been an expectation that the "price cap" privatisation model would avoid the detailed hands-on control that was the evil of the nationalised industries. But price capping controls, within limits, the major cash inflow of the company. It cannot be set in a vacuum, but has to be related to the major cash outflows that the regulator deems reasonable. Hence, the regulator must take a view about operating costs and efficiency, the amount of capital investment, and how this is to be financed and the cost of finance: ie to model the companies' accounts, and for a period of future years. This was not a "hidden assumption", as Jenkins puts it, but a consequence of the type of regulation — and probably unavoidable with any effective regulation of monopolies.

Perhaps initially it was expected that the regulators would need to carry out only periodic reviews of the price cap, the companies having freedom to manage between reviews. In fact, many events generated by the companies and by external factors, eg takeovers, have required the regulators to intervene more frequently.

Another issue of concern is that the utilities provide an essential infrastructure for industry, as well as the domestic consumer. But neither Parliament nor the public knows whether the decisions that have been made by the companies and the regulators are providing the investment necessary for the future competitiveness of British industry and the prosperity of the country.

Yours sincerely,
A. J. PERRY,
Savanna, Park View Road,
Woldingham, Surrey,
May 15.

From Mr Harry Hornsby

Sir, To add to Simon Jenkins's perceptive article today, the disincentive to management resulting from draconian measures such as these by utility regulators will be profound. No longer will there be financial reward to a

company for successful innovation and productivity gains, as it can be wiped out at a stroke by the regulator; similarly, there will be no point in competing for business or taking other risks. The regulator is now an even more powerful threat to a utility than Parliament, for the latter must pass an Act to create, for example, a windfall tax, while the regulator needs no such approval.

I fear that management will be more interested in the preservation of their jobs than in progress or profit — a return, in effect, to the attitudes of nationalised industry. Ultimately this must be to the disadvantage of consumers who can expect higher costs and a reduction in service.

Clearly regulation is in a mess. The system needs urgent revision before damage is done to these crucial industries.

Yours faithfully,
HARRY HORNSBY,
Little Paddock,
20 Waterford Lane,
Lymington, Hampshire,
May 15.

From Mr Granville Davies

Sir, If British Gas is to be effectively renationalised through the intervention of the Ofgas regulator, as Pennington suggests today, can the little Sids like me rely on the City regulators to take action against the Government for misleading us in 1986 to invest in what we were led to believe would be a private enterprise?

This must surely work against the original Conservative concept of a shareholding democracy, even if the discouragement of small investors with their disproportionate servicing costs suits the current policy of British Gas.

Yours,
GRANVILLE DAVIES,
5 Warren Wood,
Warren Road,
Crowborough, East Sussex,
May 14.

From Mr Lewis Stretch

Sir, The main responsibility for this latest nonsense lies on the Government, for introducing an inherently unstable system of controlling utilities. Yet anyone with any experience of gas transmission systems must challenge Ofgas's claim that the regulator's policy of swingeing and success-

sive cuts will have no effect on standards of service and safety. As the level of complaints last year showed, steadily reducing manpower to satisfy arbitrary financial targets leaves any service incapable of meeting exceptional conditions or situations.

The most intriguing aspect of this case to any engineer is that Ofgas is promoting the bad practices of the former water and sewage authorities, who kept prices down by failing to maintain their infrastructures. The cost of that folly is now becoming apparent; and it is important to realise that, as my first problem at the Gas Council — the Roman Point tower block disaster in 1968 (there were even more serious incidents overseas) — illustrated, gas leaks are even more dangerous than water ones.

Yours faithfully,
LEWIS STRETCH
(Director, Research & Development,
Gas Council, 1969-71),
3 Larc Close,
Godmanchester, Cambridgeshire,
May 15.

From the Director, National Energy Action

Sir, Far from being the response of caring utilities to the needs of low-income consumers as Pennington suggests (May 9), prepayment meters primarily benefit the supplier by maintaining consumption and payment whilst collecting any existing debt.

If consumer benefit were a priority, utilities would not impose the surcharge on prepayment customers which typically requires them to pay at least 5 per cent more for fuel than customers using other payment methods — an unusual manifestation of a "socially sensitive" approach.

At present some 4 million consumers use prepayment meters to pay for fuel consumption. Many of these consumers face regular disconnection from supply, not through the actions of the utilities but through poverty. Prepayment meters are not a solution — they are indicators of a serious social problem.

Yours faithfully,
ANDREA COOK,
Director,
National Energy Action,
St Andrew's House,
90-92 Pilgrim Street,
Newcastle upon Tyne,
May 15.

from compulsory acts of worship. It is no wonder to me that my daughter has not quite mastered reading yet.

We should stop vilifying those professionals who choose to work in difficult inner-city schools, recognise their dedication, and campaign for the funds they need desperately to resource a sensible teacher/pupil ratio at infant level.

Yours,
SHONA KELLY,
82 Lansdowne Drive, E8,
May 11.

From Mrs Elizabeth Morrison

Sir, When I went as governess to Little King Falay of Iraq in 1940 I took with me a copy of the splendid *Reading Without Tears*, written by Mrs Favel Lee Mortimer in 1887.

In a few weeks he wrote "I have got a carji, to smol horses pool the carji". Efforts need not be made to make the learning of reading so attractive to children; they can always be read to. Rather it should become a necessary daily routine, like getting dressed or finishing food. Correct spelling and enjoyment come later.

Yours faithfully,
ELIZABETH MORRISON,
Granhams,
Great Shelford, Cambridge.

from the Government's continued use of forced labour on road, rail and other infrastructural projects. For this reason Human Rights Watch calls on companies not to invest there.

Ms Pitman claims that "international Coca Cola culture has already arrived in Burma". To the contrary, Coca Cola itself has refused to invest in Burma, citing human rights concerns. Their rival, Pepsi-Co, was last month forced, under pressure from American students, to sell its shares in its Burmese subsidiary.

British companies should also be aware that the EC is currently investigating the use of forced labour in Burma, with a view to withdrawing the preferential import tariffs which Burma currently enjoys as a developing country.

Yours sincerely,
ZUNETTA LIDDELL,
Human Rights Watch/Asia,
33 Islington High Street, N1,
May 14.

Investing in Burma

From Ms Zusetta Liddell

Sir, Joanna Pitman, in her article today, "British business marches slowly back on the road to Mandalay", describes the growth, albeit slow, of UK companies investing in Burma. May I draw your attention to her own Magazine article of March 2, quoting opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi (whose party took 82 per cent of the seats in the 1990 election but to whom the military has refused to transfer power):

The British approach is certainly not something one could ever be proud of. These people are hurrying to make cosy little business deals while pretending that nothing is wrong. They need to be reminded that this is one of the most brutal military regimes in the world and putting money into the country now is simply supporting a system that is severely harmful to the people of Burma.

No investment in Burma today can avoid directly or indirectly benefiting

A little night music

From Mr Gerald Kaufman, MP for Manchester, Gorton (Labour)

Sir, What claptrap Nicholas Kenyon writes (letter, May 15) about his new, downmarket Radio 3.

He talks about its "informed, approachable style of presentation". Informed? Is he referring to the factual errors in which, for example, a Beethoven piano concerto is given the wrong number? Or the mispronunciation, as when Serge Prokofiev's first name is made to sound like a type of fabric?

Approachable? Can he possibly be

alluding to the almost incessant banal chatter by "presenters", interrupted by the further banal chatter purveyed by recorded trailers for other infuriating programmes?

Most questionable of all is Mr Kenyon's claim that this degradation of Radio 3 has been inflicted because it "draws in listeners who might not otherwise listen to the channel". The fact is that the audience for this jabbering Radio 3 has actually been falling.

Yours sincerely,
GERALD KAUFMAN,
House of Commons,
May 15.

Children's diet in the 'muesli belt'

From Mr J. A. Clewett

Sir, I applaud the general thrust of Dr Stuttaford's article regarding the starvation diets which increasingly health-conscious parents are inflicting upon their children ("Muesli-belt diet causes danger across all classes", Medical Briefing, May 13). However, I must take Dr Stuttaford to task over his statement that "when children's teeth decay it is not because they eat jam roly-poly or treacle tart... but because they haven't brushed their teeth properly".

The cause of tooth decay is sugar. Tooth-brushing alone will not effectively reduce decay, since most people only brush their teeth once or twice a day and the toothbrush is physically incapable of cleansing the narrow fissures and contact points between teeth where carious attack generally begins. The anti-caries effect of fluoride in toothpaste is not helping the 13 per cent of North Wales five-year-olds who have dental extractions under general anaesthesia each year.

The Scientific Basis of Dental Health Education, published by the Health Education Authority, provides definitive advice which is endorsed by the dental profession: limit sugar intake to meal times. Avoid sugary snacks or beverages between meals but at meal times, go on, enjoy yourself.

Yours sincerely,

J. A. CLEWETT
(Deputy Director of Dental Services),
Clwydian Community Care,
Catherine Gladstone House,
Hawarden Way, Manxot, Deeside,
May 14.

From Mr Robert Howe

Sir, Thank goodness for the common sense of Dr Thomas Stuttaford, who draws long overdue attention to the widespread malnutrition of children by overly health-conscious parents. As a teacher of 7 to 11-year-olds, I would like to add that not only are these parents compromising their children's physical development by eliminating essential fats and proteins — they are risking the youngsters' mental health by making them afraid of food.

Too often children are encouraged by their parents to be suspicious and anxious, ever vigilant lest some unscrupulous cook attempts to poison them by offering something awful, like baked beans containing sugar. Such artificial anxiety is, I believe, incompatible with a healthy, happy and carefree childhood.

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT HOWE,
Crackenthorp, Skinburness,
Carlisle, Cumbria,
May 13.

Nietzsche at St Paul's

From the Dean of St Paul's

Sir, Richard Morrison's somewhat intemperate article ("Death of God? No problem with us", Arts, May 11) is a preview of Delius's *A Mass of Life*, to be sung in German in St Paul's Cathedral on July 3.

Mr Morrison appears not to understand Nietzsche's text as it is set by Delius in this work. The Dean and Chapter have read this carefully and we find there is nothing in these words of Nietzsche which specifically "pours scorn on the central concepts of Christianity" (the terms used in the City of London Festival brochure to describe Nietzsche's *Also sprach Zarathustra*, from which Delius drew his text).

Although by no means Christian, the text is simply an affirmation of the joy of life and its renewal. Since this is not a service of Christian worship but a concert organised by the City of London Festival, the Dean and Chapter felt its performance in St Paul's was acceptable.

Yours etc,
ERIC EVANS,
The Deanery, 9 Amen Court, EC4,
May 13.

Food for thought

From Dr Mary P. E. Agass

Sir, During a visit to Bangkok two weeks ago, my hotel was offering fresh European (Dutch) asparagus on its menu. On my return to Oxford, I discovered equally succulent bunches of Thai asparagus on sale in my local supermarket. This is despite the fact that local English asparagus is now available.

Is the transportation of perishable, luxury food around the globe the most sensible use of the world's limited oil reserves?

Yours faithfully,
MARY P. E. AGASS,
Hampton House, Clifton Hampden,
Abingdon, Oxfordshire.

High society

From Professor Emeritus Edward Garden

Sir, Although the names of so many great composers begin with early letters of the alphabet (Jenens, May 7, 11, 14, 15), especially B., this did not worry Wagner. He merely turned the musical world upside down.

Yours faithfully,
EDWARD GARDEN,
Balchraggan Farm House,
Kirkhill, Inverness.

BUSINESS 29

Brewer regards Chinese market as no small beer

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Dawn Upshaw lifts the curtain on Glyndebourne '96

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Clement Freud checks out the England set-up

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THE TIMES

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

FRIDAY MAY 17 1996

Alfred McAlpine directors arrested in Revenue raid

BY CLARE STEWART AND ROBERT MILLER

TWO board directors of Alfred McAlpine, the construction group, were arrested yesterday morning in an Inland Revenue swoop on two of the company's offices, in which a number of documents were seized.

Eric Grove, a non-executive director, and Graeme McCallum, managing director of the homes division, were arrested, as was Derek Green, a self-employed investment consul-

tant with Gerrard Vivian Gray, a leading private client stockbroker. A spokeswoman for the Inland Revenue said: "We visited a number of premises in London and the Midlands and three arrests were made by the police. The three men were arrested on charge of conspiracy to commit false accounting."

The investigation into the three men was led by the Special Compliance Office, an executive arm of the Inland Revenue, using powers granted under Section 20c of the Taxes Management Act. Such powers are used rarely. The special tax investigators have to persuade the Board of the Inland Revenue of the strength of their case before going to a judge to seek search warrants.

The Revenue charges relate solely to personal affairs of the three men. A statement by the construction company said the Revenue's raid "is not in any way related to the business or tax position of Alfred McAlpine PLC or any of its subsidiaries". Mr Grove, 66, a property develop-

er living at Lapworth, near Solihull, is a multi-millionaire and a former director of Coventry City Football Club, of which he is president. He holds the second-largest stake in Alfred McAlpine and has a holding of just over 14 per cent, including non-beneficial shares, worth £17.3 million at yesterday's closing price. Mr Grove acquired his stake after selling his housebuilding business, Canberra, to Alfred McAlpine in 1988 for more than £25 million. In the year to December last year, he earned £208,000 as a non-executive director.

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES		
FT-SE 100	3753.6	(-22.6)
FT-SE All share	1886.99	(-9.34)
Nikkei	22147.21	(+91.24)
Dow Jones	9620.64	(-4.80)
S&P Composite	963.33	(-1.55)
US RATE		
Federal Funds	5.1/4%	(5.1/4%)
Long Bond	89 1/8%	(89 1/8%)
Yield	6.90%	(6.94%)
LONDON MONEY		
3-mth Interbank	6 1/4%	(6 1/4%)
Libor long gilt	106 1/2	(106 1/2)
STERLING		
New York	1.5135*	(1.5138)
London	1.5117	(1.5131)
DM	2.3221	(2.3212)
FF	7.8651	(7.8594)
Sfr	1.9228*	(1.9257)
Yen	161.23	(161.68)
£ Index	84.5	(84.5)
DOLLAR		
London	1.5340*	(1.5330)
DM	5.1940*	(5.1915)
Sfr	1.2572*	(1.2581)
Yen	106.62*	(106.92)
£ Index	97.0	(96.9)
Tokyo close Yen	106.75	
NORTH SEA OIL		
Brent 15-day (Jul)	\$17.90	(\$18.55)
GOLD		
London close	\$381.95	(\$392.70)
* denotes midday trading price		

Pattullo quits Standard Life

BY MARIANNE CURPHEY

SIR Bruce Pattullo, governor of the Bank of Scotland, has resigned abruptly from the board of Standard Life just four days after the insurer confirmed that it was planning to sell its 32.2 per cent stake in the bank.

His departure came as a surprise to Standard Life, one of Britain's biggest institutional investors and insurance houses. He has been a non-executive director on Standard Life's board since 1985 when the insurer bought the stake from Barclays for £155 million.

He is believed to have been angered by the way the announcement was made, and by the insurer's decision to sell such a large stake at short notice. The sale effectively makes the bank a target for a hostile takeover bid.

Standard Life expressed surprise at the move. "We had no idea he was going, and he was absolutely not asked to leave by us," a spokeswoman said. His replacement will be considered at the next board meeting at the end of the month.

The Bank of Scotland said if Sir Bruce had continued to hold a seat on Standard Life's board there would have been "a conflict of interest". He had therefore decided to resign with immediate effect. "Better that he resign now than excuse himself from the next board meeting," a spokesman said. "It makes things difficult when Standard Life is reviewing its own options on its stakeholding." The bank is now at Standard Life's mercy and it is believed that Sir Bruce felt that he could no longer act as a board member for Standard Life while the insurer was looking for the

highest bidder for its stake in the bank. Standard Life said it had decided to sell the stake because it represented 6 per cent of its UK equity holdings and was a disproportionately large amount.

Scott Bell, Standard Life's group managing director, and Norman Lesseis, chairman, are both on the board of the Bank of Scotland. There was speculation yesterday that one or both may also resign.

In his resignation letter to Mr Lesseis, Sir Bruce, 58, who has been with the bank for more than 30 years, said he would "continue to work constructively with Standard Life in order to find an acceptable solution if Standard Life decide to sell some or all of their shareholding in the Bank".

Sir Bruce's resignation follows Standard Life's statement on Monday that it was planning to sell its £900 million stake in the 300-year-old Scottish bank. Standard Life has denied that it intends to use the cash to underpin a stock-market flotation. It may buy a building society or build up overseas interests in order to maintain its independence.

Although a placing of the shares is possible, the proposed sale of the 32.2 per cent stake does leave the bank vulnerable to takeover: potential predators have been named as HSBC, Midland Bank's parent, Abbey National and Halifax Building Society.

Alex Salmond, Scottish National Party leader and a former oil analyst at the Royal Bank of Scotland, yesterday called for any takeover to be referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.



Sir Bruce is thought to have been angered by the insurer's decision to sell its 32 per cent stake

Mortgage moves help inflation to hit 18-month low

BY JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

HEADLINE inflation fell to its lowest level for 18 months in April in spite of a surge in prices for alternatives to beef after the "mad-cow" scare, and economists said that they believed it was set to fall further in the months ahead.

The retail prices index rose 0.7 per cent in the month, but its annual rate fell to 2.4 per cent, from 2.7 per cent, according to the Office for National Statistics. However, the underlying inflation rate, which the Government aims to bring down to 2.5 per cent or less, held unchanged in April at 2.9 per cent.

The fall in the headline inflation rate was largely because last April's reduction in Miras mortgage interest tax relief fell out of annual comparisons and because there was a mortgage rate cut in April this year.

There were also price falls in household goods and household services such as home contents insurance premiums.

Exerting an upward pressure on prices, however, were slightly higher motor insurance premiums after the fierce competition of last year and prices for non-seasonal food. This category, in itself, added 0.06 per cent to the annual rate of inflation, largely because of large price rises for poultry, pork and domestic lamb as

consumers rushed to find substitutes for beef.

Lamb prices rose nearly 17 per cent and pork 10 per cent, while beef prices fell 2.5 per cent. However, statisticians said that they expected beef prices to rise a little this month and for the price of other meats to level off.

Although the underlying rate has stubbornly stuck at nearly 3 per cent, economists believe, along with the Bank of England, that it will now start dropping. Sharp falls in producer output prices in recent months as well as surveys of manufacturers' price expectations suggest that even underlying inflation should start dropping. The headline rate should benefit again in May from cuts in mortgage rates.

One remarkable figure to emerge yesterday was a fall in the tax and prices index (TPI) to 1 per cent in April, from 3 per cent in March, because of the tax cuts announced in the November Budget. The last time the TPI was lower was in March 1993.

Service sector inflation fell to 2 per cent in April, from 2.2 per cent in March, its lowest level since May, 1986. Simon Briscoe, of Nikko Europe, said that, given the attention paid to strength in demand for services in recent quarters, this was encouraging.

Hanson blow

Dividends paid after Hanson splits into four parts could fall to half their current level. Derek Bonham, chief executive, warned investors as he announced details of the £11 billion demerger. The warning and a disappointing set of half-year profits, knocked 2.5p off the share price to 194.5p.

Poor sales

British Gas suffered a further blow yesterday after poor sales to industrial customers dragged down the company's first-quarter earnings.

BT despairs at cap as profit hits £3bn

BY ERIC REGULY

THE chances that BT will trigger a monopolies referral appeared to increase yesterday after the company gave warning that another round of tight price controls would damage it in spite of the strong profit gains made in its last financial year.

Sir Iain Vallance, chairman, said that BT "simply cannot survive" if the price cap that comes into effect in 1997 is similar to the current one, which ensures that prices fall each year by 7 1/2 per cent in real terms. Ofel, the telecommunications regulator, is to reveal the new price cap level at the end of this month. BT will then have until August to accept or reject it.

His comments came as BT revealed a pre-tax profit of £3 billion in the year to August 31, up 13.4 per cent from the previous year. Some analysts said the higher earnings may add only weight to Ofel's arguments that BT is fully capable of operating under fairly tight price controls.

Sir Peter Bonfield, BT's chief executive, said he was "neither optimistic nor pessimistic" that a referral to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission could be avoided.

Lower redundancy charges — they declined from £820 million to £420 million — were behind the double-digit profits increase. After adjusting for the redundancy charges and other non-recurring items, BT's earnings per share rose 6 per cent to 18.7p.

Turnover was up 4 per cent to £14.4 billion in spite of mope than £300 million in price reductions in its domestic operations. A final dividend of 11.25p is to be paid, making the total dividend 18.7p, up 5.6 per cent.

BT said that it has no intention of paying a special dividend or buying back its shares even though gearing has fallen from 18 per cent to 8 per cent. The shares fell 1p to 333p.

Classic Bloodstock departure

BY ROBERT MILLER

THE principal trainer to Classic Bloodstock, the troubled racing investment group that raised £6 million from 6,500 investors in two issues, has quit on the eve of the company's annual meeting.

Stuart Williams, the Newmarket trainer, has ordered Ron Dawson, the founder and managing director of Classic Bloodstock, to remove the company's ten horses from his Birdcage Walk yard. Mr Williams, who is the third respected trainer to part company with the racing group since it was started in 1994, took the unusual step over Classic's continued use of Allan Mackay, the retained jockey. The trainer wanted to be allowed to use the "best available jockeys".

Classic Watch, the investors' action group headed by Fraser Earle, will press for an explanation of the loss of Mr Williams's services at the agm at Charnwood Stables, Newmarket, today.

Another departure at Spring Ram

BY JASON NISSE

SPRING RAM, the troubled home products company, has parted company with the head of its bathrooms operation in an attempt to turn round the business.

Tom Sykes, who was promoted by Roger Regan, the chairman, when he took control of Spring Ram three years ago, has left the company and is being replaced by Robin Trotter.

The shake-up comes against a background of rising debts and continued poor trading at the operation, where founder Bill Rooney was ousted by institutional investors in 1993.

Borrowings have increased to £62 million, from £46 million, at the end of last year, when the group shocked the City by announcing pre-tax losses of £43.6 million for 1995.

Martin Towers, finance director, said there would be a seasonal increase in borrowings but close followers of the business believe the rise has

been more than he was anticipating.

Mr Regan has said he will step aside from his role as executive chairman when he can find an appropriate replacement. However, the candidate believed to be favourite by those employed at Spring Ram — Hartley Moyes, special products chief — is now also expected to leave when the doors business that has been put up for sale is disposed of.

There is a shortlist of fewer than six bidders for the doors operation, which is believed to be worth about £20 million. Another operation, Stag Furniture, is up for sale with a price-tag of £12 million. Mr Regan has angered management by telling them not to bid and John Proctor, the operation's chief executive, resigned last month.

On the stock market, Spring Ram shares closed at 20p, just over half their price a year ago and a fraction of their peak of 172p in 1992.

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Business Finance

Hanson split could lead to halved dividends

By Jason Nisse

DIVIDENDS paid after Hanson splits into four parts could fall to half their current level. Derek Bonham, the chief executive, gave this warning as he announced details of the £11 billion demerger yesterday.

That, and a disappointing set of half-year profits, knocked 2.5p off the share price to 194.5p.

Hanson is splitting into Imperial Tobacco, Millennium Chemicals, the energy side — as yet unnamed, and a rump of building materials and equipment, which will retain the name Hanson. Mr Bonham told institutional shareholders that he was happy with forecasts of a dividend of between 6p and 8p for the new Hanson, a figure confirmed by Andrew Dougal, the finance director-elect.

The company is spending about £40 million on the demerger, mostly in fees to its tax advisers Ernst & Young. Hanson is confident that neither it, nor its shareholders, will have to pay any extra tax as a result of the split-off.

The demerger of Imperial

and Millennium will take place in October, after shareholders' meetings in September. The energy side will be hived off in the new year. Shareholders will get one Millennium share for every 70 old Hanson; the ratio for Imperial and energy will be one in ten. The way the group's £3.5 billion of debt is being divided up surprised the market. Millennium will bear the largest burden, ending up with more than £1.3 billion of borrowings. Energy and Imperial will have just over £1 billion each, and new Hanson no more than £200m. "I'm surprised the rump of Hanson is so lightly geared, it has no stated acquisition plans," said Charles Pick, conglomerates analyst at the stockbroker, Panmure Gordon. "There must be some sort of tax reason for it."

Hanson's last set of half-year profits as a conglomerate were also seen as a disappointment. Through the headline figure showed a 27 per cent increase to £794 million, the City was quick to point out that this year's included exceptional gains of £160 million from disposals, while last year's had a £10 million exceptional loss. This left an increase of £1 million.

But even that masked a couple of one-off gains. The sale by Eastern Electricity of its stake in First Hydro netted £26 million and there was a dividend of £28 million from National Grid before its sale.

The poor figures were largely the fault of the US chemical operation, where one of the group's polyethylene operations was not profitable and other parts of the business were hit by price cuts.

The City is now expecting the market to warm to Hanson as it digests the implications of the demerger. A leading financier said: "This should give the divisions more focus and energy and get rid of some of the funny accounting, which no one liked."



Angela Knight, with the Treasury review of the 1984 Building Societies Act, is to consult the industry over the two-year rule

Knight resists call for change

By Caroline Merrell

THE Government is refusing to bow to pressure to bring in legislation to prevent speculators joining building societies thought likely to be taken over or to float on the stock market.

At the Building Societies Association Conference yesterday, Angela Knight, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, refused to back the societies' demands to harden immediately the two-year rule on membership, whereby only members of two years' standing can receive takeover or flotation cash payouts.

As more of the biggest societies have opted to convert or be taken over, the Building Societies Association has called for the rule to be more clearly defined. At present, all society account-holders can receive shares upon a takeover or a conversion.

Mrs Knight said that she

intended to consult the industry over this rule.

However, Ken Cutley, the association chairman, said: "Many suspect that the real reason for the Government's reluctance to solve this problem is political. It is unwilling to risk alienating large numbers of individuals who are now convinced they have an entitlement to a payout from their building society, irrespective of their length of membership."

Mrs Knight said: "The change in interpretation of the two-year rule which has allowed shares to be offered to members of less than two years' standing was brought about by the actions of the BSA's own members, past and present."

She said that hardening the rule could discriminate against people with accounts of less than two years' standing. Although unwilling to be drawn on this particular piece of legislation, she did invite societies to consult about barring a thwarted bidder from making another bid for a society for one year, which would bring societies within company takeover rules.

□ The Birmingham Midshires Building Society has confirmed that it is in talks with the West Bromwich Building Society about a takeover. Mike Jackson, Birmingham Midshires chief executive, said yesterday: "We have expressed to their board our interest in forming a partnership to bring our two organisations together."

The Bradford and Bingley, the fifth-biggest society, also said yesterday that it would be interested in talking to the West Bromwich, the eleventh-largest, about a takeover.

Meanwhile, TOI is exporting its insurance cover to the United States where it will be offered to New York Stock Exchange listed companies.

Pennington, page 27

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Glaxo sales ahead as Zantac fades

GLAXO WELLCOME, Britain's largest pharmaceuticals group, revealed at its annual meeting yesterday that overall sales in the four months to April 30 were £2.8 billion, up 11 per cent over the same period a year before, in spite of a 10 per cent drop in the sales of Zantac, its top drug. Excluding Zantac, sales were up 17 per cent, reflecting the success of new drugs such as Imigran, a migraine treatment.

Sir Richard Sykes, Glaxo's chief executive, played down the potential damage posed to the company by the loss of Zantac's patent protection in America next year. He noted that Zantac sales represent only 24 per cent of total sales, against 40 per cent a couple of years ago. He said: "As a result of the continuing decline of Zantac sales, and the rapid growth of new products, we now expect that Zantac sales, which may be materially affected by generic competition in mid-1997, could then be as low as 10 per cent of group total sales." The company said that trading profit growth was "well in excess" of sales growth because of cost savings and efficiencies derived from merging Glaxo with Wellcome over the past year. The sales increase was higher than expected and helped to lift the shares by 47½p, to 856½p.

BTR issues warning

SHARES in BTR, the industrial conglomerate, fell 14p to 297p after the company told its annual meeting that it expected operating profits for the first half of 1996 to be "moderately below" the same period last year. BTR said most of its businesses had lifted sales and operating profits against the same period last year. However, it said that this progress would be offset by Polymer Taiwan, where the previous good first-half performance had been reversed, and Sealing Systems, where start-up costs had slowed the return on significant new investments.

Debt hits bank profits

CLYDESDALE and Yorkshire banks, both owned by National Australia Bank, saw profits fall in the six months to March 31. Clydesdale profits before tax fell to £123 million (£65 million) after bad-debt charges rose to £20 million, while profits at Yorkshire fell to £116 million after bad debts rose to £61 million. But profits at National Australia's Northern Bank in Northern Ireland rose 22 per cent to £78 million, and at the National Irish Bank in Dublin by 4.5 per cent to £23 million. Group operating profit was up 4.6 per cent to £598 million.

Greycoat sale proceeds

GREYCOAT shareholders yesterday approved the sale of 151 Buckingham Palace despite opposition from the UK Active Value Fund. Greycoat's net asset value fell by 8p to 167p during the year to March 31, due to a reduction in the value of the group's investment properties. Greycoat made a pre-tax loss of £300,000 during the year after a £5 million provision for debt repayment, but operating profit after interest rose from £2.1 million to £3.7 million. The dividend is up from 0.6p to 0.8p per share.

Guinness confidence

TONY GREENER, chairman of Guinness, told the company's annual meeting yesterday that trading was in line with expectations for the first four months of the year. Mr Greener added that he was confident that the company would show steady growth in profits during the year and that Guinness would continue to increase the level of marketing investment in both United Distillers and Guinness Brewing Worldwide. Shares in the company lost 3p yesterday to close at 486p.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia \$	1.98	1.92
Austria Sch	17.32	15.82
Belgium Fr	50.83	46.33
Canada \$	2.172	2.018
Cyprus Cyp	0.760	0.705
Denmark Kr	9.57	8.77
Finland Mk	7.13	7.09
France Fr	8.26	7.61
Germany Dm	2.47	2.25
Greece Dr	385.00	380.00
Hong Kong \$	12.35	11.35
Ireland Pt	1.02	0.94
Israel Sh	5.280	4.690
Italy Lit	2484.00	2308.00
Japan Yen	175.50	158.50
Malta	1.592	0.557
Netherlands Gld	2.746	2.516
New Zealand \$	2.35	2.13
Norway Kr	10.54	9.74
Portugal Esc	249.50	231.00
S Africa Rd	7.57	6.27
Spain Ptas	201.00	188.00
Sweden Kr	10.85	10.05
Switzerland Fr	2.05	1.85
Turkey Lira	120765	112765
USA \$	1.611	1.481

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

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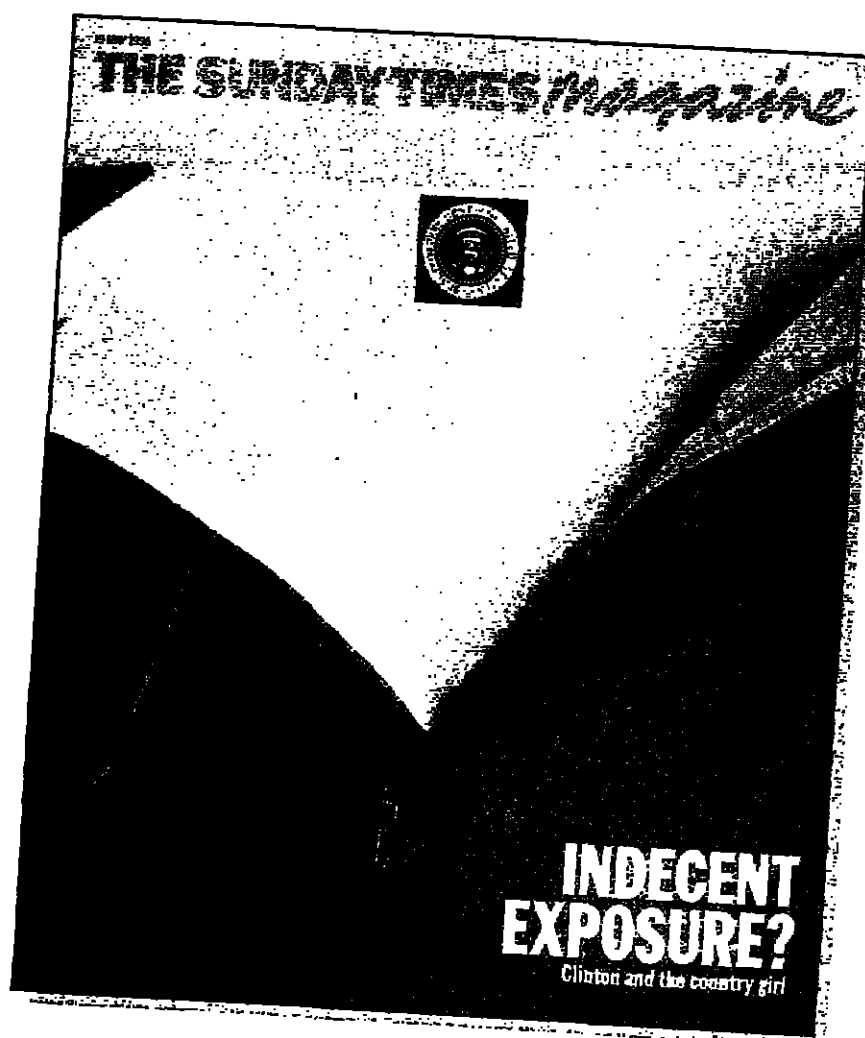
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THE SUNDAY TIMES



THE UNDOING OF A PRESIDENT

Either Bill Clinton dropped his pants in that hotel room, or he didn't. In The Sunday Times Magazine, Russell Miller investigates the fall-out from the president's alleged sexual misconduct in 1991

THE SUNDAY TIMES IS THE SUNDAY PAPERS

مكتبة من الامم

□ First numbers from the Hanson split □ US threat to small accountants □ Japan and Germany run out of steam

The virtues of disintegration

□ HANSON'S first-half figures give initial details of the effects of splitting into four different companies. Paradoxically, they also show the benefits of remaining a conglomerate.

This is not to attack the demerger, clearly the right course of action on a stock market that mistrusts conglomerates and rates them almost on the basis of the lowest common denominator among the businesses that make them up.

Contrast this to the view in the late 1980s, which was to take an average across the group and then add on a percentage for its charmed status as a conglomerate, that percentage having been calculated according to what view you took of the management. No surprise that the diversified industrial sector has underperformed the FT-SE by about 25 per cent since the start of 1991.

Hanson's profits may have come in as expected, but their make-up showed a sharper than expected fall in earnings from chemicals that was more than balanced by an upturn at the enlarged energy side. Disregard for a moment the fact that much of this came from acquisitions, particularly Eastern last summer: the discredited theory of conglomerates had it that what you lost on the roundabout you gained on the swings, so allow-

ing a smooth profits stream year on year. The chemical cycle is against you, but lax regulation in British energy makes up for this.

Once demerged, chemicals and building products, which will stay within the core Hanson business, will be wildly cyclical and subject to huge profits swings. Tobacco — and how pleasant to see an Imperial Tobacco back on the stock market — will be a business in managed decline, while it is not easy to see the immediate advantage in putting together a US coal business and a regulated British electricity combine.

Thus the negatives. They are heavily outweighed by the positives, whatever yesterday's fall for the shares says about market nerves after signs that the price had been clawing itself back above the £2 mark again. Tax and other costs, initially seen as uncomfortably heavy, are in the company's words "containable".

A recent broker's report on Hanson assessed the break-up value at 224p a share. The demerger is tax-efficient for shareholders, and small investors will be offered a cheap

dealing service to allow them to switch out of unwanted shares.

What is really driving the optimists, and forget talk of more focused management and other corporate guff, is that one or more may be taken over. The debt profile — lots on to chemicals and tobacco, less on to energy and virtually none on building materials — suggests that the first two are seen as the bid candidates and the others are in expansion mode, the last probably by takeover. The market is swamped with data, but once the Hanson roadshows start, look for the shares to move up again.

The Americans are coming

□ IN AN ideal world, every middle-class household would have an accountant and a solicitor, in the same way as a dentist and a family doctor. It is only the reactionary stupidity of those two professions that prevents their services spreading down the income scale, to the benefit of practice and client alike.

PENNINGTON



The lawyers are probably beyond saving. We will only ever see them during hugely expensive life crises — deaths, divorces and house moves. The accountants are facing the most serious shake-out since the advent of double-entry bookkeeping, and many medium-sized practices will not survive the coming competition. Few will mourn their passing.

H & R Block, the American company that has been called the McDonald's of the personal tax preparation industry, is coming to Britain. The attraction is the arrival last month of self-assessment reforms, which require nine million higher-rate tax payers and the self-employed to calculate their own tax liability.

Little known in this country, Block came into view this week with the appointment of Richard Brown, its chief executive, to the same post at Cable and Wireless. Mr Brown lost no time setting out his current employer's ambitions in the UK.

Based in Kansas City, Missouri, the company is the American leader in personal tax accounting. The arrival of the tax return is an annual nightmare for most Americans. Block was launched in 1954 by Henry and Richard Block — they changed the spelling so it would not be mispronounced — to charge low and medium-income families a relatively small fee to prepare their returns.

By the mid-1990s, Block was preparing some 17 million individual returns a year and had become a high street fixture across the country. Relying on non-professional employees who pay for cheap tax classes that qualify them to do the work, H & R Block is America's largest seasonal white-collar employer.

The potential in the UK is clear, and traditional accountants, to judge from their past record, are

in no position to meet the need. By contrast, Block's record in the US has been one of aggressive and effective marketing.

Value cult goes East

□ THE cult of short-term shareholder value seems to be gaining ground in continental Europe and Japan, just as it is beginning to be questioned in Britain and America.

Iain Beattie, of Scottish Amicable Investment Managers, argued at its annual investment conference that the change of heart makes Tokyo and continental shares more attractive. Who would have guessed ten years ago that Toyota would make a share buyback, Daimler-Benz would lop chunks off its business and Suez would start dismantling its empire?

Unfortunately, as British investors know, the catch is in the explanation for this change of heart towards patient investors. Mr Beattie says this culture shift is driven by three years of recession and limited prospects.

"Previously, the superior economic growth in countries such as Germany and Japan compensated for the negative impact of stakeholding on equity investment returns."

The new focus on investor returns is surely a sign that Germany and Japan have run out of steam. Will they also adopt the downsizing cult, which has kept profits, dividends and shares buoyant, but is now denounced by chief priest Stephen Roach?

Investors looking for growth should focus on economies that are still expanding fast, where big companies have better things to do with their cash flow than to tell shareholders to find their own investment opportunities.

Breaking ranks

□ SIR Bruce Patullo has rather blown the gaff on any attempt to pretend that the relationship between the Bank of Scotland and Standard Life is still amicable now Standard Life has decided to sell its 32 per cent stake. On Monday, the bank was saying, through clenched teeth, that it was all a matter for its biggest shareholder. No matter that Standard may have been under a fiduciary duty to sell down: Sir Bruce's departure shows the bank's view of this breach of the Charlotte Square code of omerta.

Poor sales hit earnings at beleaguered British Gas

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY

BRITISH GAS suffered a further blow yesterday after poor sales to industrial customers dragged down first-quarter earnings.

The cold winter weather failed to deliver an adequate boost for the company, which faces severe pricing caps on its pipelines business from the regulator, and net income for the first three months of this year slipped to £573 million from £605 million in 1995.

Analysts had forecast the figures to be between £620 million and £670 million. TransCo, the pipelines network, increased its current cost operating profit to £508 million from £450 million. Overall pre-tax profit for the period stood at £933 million on historical cost, against £954 million the previous year.

Although the cold snaps brought a benefit of £100 million after households compensated by using more gas, British Gas's sales to industrial and commercial customers fell into a loss of £95 million, compared with a £20 million profit the previous quarter.

The company is losing large-scale customers to rivals, who are not saddled with the same take-or-pay contracts as British Gas. Roy Gardner, finance director, said that the company was paying on average 20p a therm for gas while it had to sell it at 10p a therm.

The £40 billion of take-or-pay contracts that British Gas is locked into drained £500 million from the company last year. Mr Gardner said that the company was attempting to renegotiate the contracts. It

was prepared to offer flexible deals to producers in an effort to deliver sufficient incentives for them to re-arrange the contracts.

Mr Gardner added that the losses from take-or-pay obligations this year was expected to be around £300 million. British Gas also confirmed the further job losses it had signalled in its annual results earlier this year. Mr Gardner said that he expected a few thousand more staff to leave after a bout of applications for voluntary redundancy.

Operating costs jumped in the first quarter as the company paid to facilitate the introduction of competition through its pipeline network and tried to improve its much-derided customer service division. It has spent about £20

million on customer service after the company was bombarded with complaints.

Yesterday, British Gas was drafting a response to the Ofgas proposals that threaten a one-off charge of between 20 and 28 per cent on TransCo's revenues next year, and a running curb of RPI-X thereafter for five years. British Gas insists such controls would necessitate halving manpower, effectively putting TransCo out of business.

The two sides have been locked in a war of words since Monday's proposals from Ofgas. Clare Sportiswoode, the regulator, is believed to have asked British Gas to justify its jobs claim, while the company is lobbying to see figures produced by the regulator's independent advisers.

PowerGen starts share buy-back

POWERGEN yesterday set in motion the share buy-back programme it announced with its results earlier this week (Christine Buckley writes).

The generator, which said it would buy and cancel about 10 per cent of its shares in a £400 million plan, bought 35 million shares, or 4.8 per cent of its equity, in the market.

UBS carried out the deal, buying at an average price of £24p, making a cost of £840 million. The share price closed yesterday at £29p.

The buy-back was announced to deliver back to shareholders the proceeds from PowerGen's sale of its 21 per cent stake in Midlands Electricity, for whom its bid was vetoed, and its sale of an interest in the National Grid acquired via its Midlands holding.

Brighter Burton poised for growth

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

FIRST-HALF figures showing improved sales and sharply higher profits, together with indications of higher sales in the second half, confirmed yesterday that Burton, the retail group, is out of recovery and set for growth.

The group, which comprises Debenhams department stores and the fashion chains, Top Shop, Top Man, Dorothy Perkins, Evans, Principles, and Burton Menswear, said that in the six months ending March 2, pre-tax profits jumped 43 per cent to £88.1 million on sales of £1.09 billion, up 5.7 per cent. It increased its interim dividend 15 per cent to 1.15p per share.

Expansion is to focus on Debenhams, with plans to open eight new stores by the year 2000. The first will be in Lincoln, Trafford Park in Manchester, Banbury and the

Metro Centre, Gateshead. Others will be opened in Dublin, at the White Rose Centre near Leeds, in Barrow and in Brighton.

Burton group shares closed down 6.5p at 152.5p. The better than expected results persuaded analysts to increase their full-year forecasts, with Andrew Hughes, of UBS, moving from £130 million to £135 million.

Debenhams, which makes up around half the group, saw sales rise 3.5 per cent, while the fashion chains' sales were up 8.1 per cent. Top Shop and Top Man were the best performers, with sales up 12.6 per cent. In the first nine weeks of the second half, group sales were up 5.6 per cent. Only Burton Menswear sales were down, by 2.1 per cent.

Tempus, page 28

More make tracks for Railtrack

MORE than 650,000 applications have been received from private investors wanting shares in Railtrack, the railway track and signalling company being privatised on Monday (Our City Staff writes).

SBC Warburg has raised its estimate of 500,000 applications and now expects the Public Offer to be oversubscribed three times. The Government is now expected to raise from 30 per cent to 40 per cent the amount of the company to be sold to the public because of the level of demand. City institutions will receive less than the 70 per cent originally allotted.

It is understood that the international offer — open to financial institutions at home and abroad — has been oversubscribed four times. The brokers have already indicated that the share price is likely to come in at the top end of its indicated 350p-390p range.



John McGrath, left, and George Bull, GrandMet chairman

GrandMet sees spirits recovery

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY

GRAND METROPOLITAN, the food and spirits company, yesterday claimed that there were signs of a revival in the international spirits market.

The company, whose brands include Smirnoff Vodka, Baileys and J&B whisky, said that it was confident of pushing through price increases averaging 2 per cent and had enjoyed volume growth of 5 per cent on a like-for-like basis in the first half of the year.

The comments came yesterday after the company disclosed a 3 per cent rise in half-year profits, excluding exceptional items, to £455 million. GrandMet said that a good performance from its food division had been offset by a flat profit in International Distillers and Vintners (IDV), its spirits business. GrandMet shares fell 6p, to 440p.

GrandMet, whose chief executive is John McGrath, said that it wants to sell Pearle, its optician business, but denied that it was also looking to offload the highly profitable Burger King chain. Pearle made profits of £2 million in the half year, a fall of 50 per cent, and GrandMet said that wanted a sale price above its £125 million book value.

IDV operating profits re-

mained at £211 million. GrandMet said that it would continue to reduce reliance on the US market, where profits fell by 3 per cent, to £75 million, while investing in the emerging markets of Asia and Eastern Europe.

Profits in the packaged food division rose by 46 per cent, to £247 million, boosted by the contribution from Pet, which was acquired for £1.8 billion last year. GrandMet said that Pet had exceeded expectations and was already making a positive contribution to earnings.

The BSE scare took its toll of profits of Burger King, with the switch from British beef costing £2 million and with a £5 million dent in profits expected in the second half. UK sales tumbled by 11 per cent after the scare, but sales have stabilised in the past couple of weeks.

Overall, Burger King's sales rose by 9 per cent, boosted by strong growth in the United States, where it has 17 per cent of the market. Profits, excluding franchising sales, rose by 7 per cent, to £70 million.

The interim dividend rises by 6 per cent, to 5.85p, due on October 7.

Tempus, page 27

Shares soar as fund manager's profits leap 26% to £140m

Independence proves asset to MAM

BY PATRICIA TEHAN
BANKING CORRESPONDENT

MERCURY ASSET MANAGEMENT celebrated its first year of independence from SBC Warburg with a 26 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £140.4 million in the year to March 31.

The shares soared 38p to close at 950p last night after MAM pushed its dividend for the year 34.6 per cent higher, to 35p. The final payment of 29p is due on July 3. Hugh Stevenson, chairman of MAM, said the board felt that the rise in dividend was appropriate given the increased liquidity of the balance sheet. Dividend cover fell from 1.72 times in 1995 to 1.54 times.

Mr Stevenson said he was pleased with the performance. He said MAM re-

covered its momentum in the second half of the year after the uncertainty over the ownership of Warburg disappeared with its acquisition by Swiss Bank Corporation. As part of the deal last summer, Warburg's 75 per cent stake in MAM was distributed to Warburg shareholders.

Mr Stevenson said: "You cannot go through that sort of change of ownership without affecting the business." There has been continued speculation in the City that MAM needs a strong international partner if it is to continue to expand from its traditional UK base. Mr Stevenson said: "I hope that these results show people that we are very capable of standing on our own." However, he did not rule out the possibility of a future bid for MAM or a link-up with a third party. He said: "Whatever we were to do, we

would do it from a position of considerable strength."

Funds under management rose 27.6 per cent, from £63.5 billion to £81 billion, last year, including £3.3 billion of net new business. Most of the increase came from the rise in value of client portfolios. Of the new business, £2.5 billion was added in the second half after the resolution of uncertainties.

Mr Stevenson said business was growing fastest on the international side, particularly in the US, where MAM's net new business was \$1.2 billion, and in Japan where he expected to see continued steady growth.

He said: "Fund management is a growth industry because of the need to provide retirement incomes for people, which is not going to go away."

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THE TIMES
CITY DIARY

Overlooked at Burtons

THE Burton group's days of "pile 'em high and let 'em fly" are over, the management assured investors yesterday, announcing that first-half profits were up because of attention to detail, and a more upmarket feel.

How unfortunate and how inconsistent then that the results presentations were held behind the group's flagship Debenhams store in Oxford Street, which was advertising a "12-Hour Spectacular" promising "Millions of Pounds off Thousands of Things."

Prudence

PETER DAVIS, chief executive of the Prudential, and the man most likely to buy a building society, spoke at the Building Societies Association conference in Birmingham. But his passage through the meeting rooms was greeted with some nervousness by other delegates. He confided: "People don't like to be seen talking to me."

Yorkshire brass

MIKE FIRTH, chairman and chief executive of Yorkshire Food Group, need not feel obliged to dig deep into his own pockets again this year to fund the second Yorkshire Business conference. There was even a waiting list for the two-day event at Harwood House that last year played host to 1,400 guests and 200 empty chairs.

Compass, please

CHIEF executive Francis Mackay spent the eve of Compass Group's interim results announcement breaking into a car in the depths of Waterloo. After Mr Mackay and his chums were unable to secure a table at Le Gavroche, Compass consultant Albert Roux's restaurant, the boys moved on to RSJ in Waterloo. On leaving the upmarket eatery, Mackay's party discovered their driver had locked them out of their limousine. Heading for Tower Hotel, both driver and limo were abandoned in favour of a London cab.

Country folk

JULIAN METCALFE, co-founder of Pret A Manger, the pukka sandwich chain, is moving to the country. For the sake of his three children, Metcalfe, 36, is leaving the magnificence of his £1.65 million converted schoolhouse in Batterssea, southwest London, for a derelict house in Oxfordshire. In August, Metcalfe and his clan will shut the door for the last time on their open-plan London pad, consisting of three vast classrooms, refurbished by interior decorator Willie Nickerson. The kitchen is covered in Pret A Manger burnished steel.

MORAG PRESTON

Brewer regards market in China as no small beer

Carl Mortished finds Bass thirsty for good returns from its latest overseas venture

Razzmatazz is what you need to launch a new beer and Bass International Brewers pulled out all the stops for the arrival of Tennent's lager in China. The 300 VIPs who poured out of fleets of black limousines at the China World Hotel in Peking were used to banquets. However, nothing could have prepared them for the cultural extravaganza that followed.

To a swirl of bagpipes, Gus Guthrie, managing director of the Bass Ginsberg joint venture, arrived to deliver the opening address, shortly followed by a large heggis on a plate. Clad in kilt and sporran, he gave an impassioned recitation of a Robert Burns poem and then carved up the heggis under the bemused gaze of the elderly vice-chairman of the Standing Committee of the Chinese People's Congress.

The assorted Communist Party officials, local government bigwigs, distributors, and beer trade customers listened politely to a trade union ballad delivered by two Scots with guitar and accordion. They gave a more enthusiastic response to an ear-splitting number from a Peking Opera star.

Like most marketing stunts, the frolics concealed a deadly seriousness and the real message was rammed home to anyone with eyes to see. A huge red "T" covered the backcloth to the stage and emblazoned the publicity brochures in which each guest would find discreetly placed a crisp RMB100 note (worth about £8, it is customary to pay top travel expenses). In another country, such a gathering of politicians and well-heeled businessmen might have served to launch a new political party, but in China, where successful business deals depend heavily on government connections, the guests had been invited in an effort to promote a new brand of beer.

China is the world's fastest-growing beer market. Consumption is increasing by 20 per cent per year, helped by a government five-year plan aimed at weaning the public away from high-alcohol spirits like rice wine. The country is set to overtake America as the number one beer market by 2000 and international branded beers such as San Miguel, Budweiser, Carlsberg and Heineken are already lining the bars in hotels and restaurants.

Faced with stiff competition, Bass spent three years searching for the right Chinese partner and in May last year agreed a joint venture with the Ginsberg Beer Group, a business owned by the Hong Zui Corporation, a township enterprise which grew out of an agricultural cooperative. Bass has invested \$47 million for a 55 per cent interest in the business, a brewery at Siping, in Jilin Province in the North East of China.

Ginsberg had two main attractions for Bass: modern plant installed in 1994 and its location in the North East, an area given less attention so far by foreign investors who have poured money



The growing number of bars in places such as Peking provide a ready market — discos present more of a challenge

into Shanghai and Guangdong in the South. According to Mr Guthrie, the Ginsberg brewery is one of the largest and most modern in China, producing two million hectolitres of beer a year and with the potential to double production.

The firm already produces two beers, a value brand called JTQ and Ginsberg, a more upmarket product (the name is a corruption of kings beer). But for Bass, the main attraction is to brew Tennent's lager in Siping and sell the renamed "T" Brand as a premium product to affluent 25 to 30-somethings in Peking, Shanghai and Tianjin and throughout the North East of China. The decision to promote Tennent's as a Scottish product was not taken lightly. Beer is considered by the Chinese to be a light, healthy drink "liquid bread", and in its market research Bass found that Scotland also evoked positive, pure and healthy images: mountains, lakes and clean air. This contrasted with negative images of Britain: imperialism and Margaret Thatcher.

There is an irony in the transformation of a mass market brand such as Tennent's into an exclusive brew for the wealthy and dealers in China's rampancy capitalist private sector. In Scotland, a pint of Tennent's might be a leveller, the point at which the tastes of a Charlotte Square stockbroker might meet those of a docker on the Clyde.

But in the Chinese People's Republic, a 640 ml bottle of "T" Brand would offer

no such point of contact. The product will probably be pitched at a retail price five times that of premium Chinese beers which sell for the equivalent of 10-12p on the street. The joint venture is also keen to promote draught beer which, in China, is even more expensive. The disparity of wealth between the salaried worker and the newly rich in China is enormous and growing wider by the day. Average salaries are about \$3,000 a year, but Bass is targeting the ten million or so Chinese who earn upwards of \$18,000 a year.

For such a price, explains Leslie Fitzell, international business development manager at Bass, brands are worn on your sleeve (often literally so) as a symbol of prosperity. This is particularly important given the Chinese concern with "face". Mr Fitzell said: "There is an underlying belief that what you are seen drinking determines who you are."

Tennent's will find a ready market among the tight-knit foreign community of expatriates who frequent the foreign bars that are mushrooming across Peking at the same speed as the capital's grey concrete office blocks. The British brewer is already mulling over plans for "tied pubs" which would exclusively sell Tennent's and other imported Bass beers. But the real challenge is to sell "T" Brand lager in the discos and karaoke bars that have sprung up to cater for the young and upwardly mobile. In such places, the Chinese obsession with

The Chinese obsession with brands and image has sent prices into orbit

brands and image has sent prices into orbit. Foreign lagers sell for £5 a can, and an unexceptional bottle of Chablis will set you back more than £100.

Brian Ross, international business development director, said that the chase for branded products is in part due to high levels of disposable income. While average earnings may be low, the Chinese have fewer demands on their wallets in a country where the Government or the employer provides housing. Few Chinese own their own homes and private cars are an unaffordable luxury, discouraged with huge import duties.

That leaves the Chinese with plenty of spare cash to buy status in a more modest way. Mr Ross said: "If you cannot buy a Range Rover and park it next to your neighbour's Montego, you can buy a packet of Marlboro and place it on the table next to his Chinese cigarettes."

Having acquired one brewery, Bass is already on the lookout for others to extend its reach in a market that is highly fragmented and where local brews enjoy considerable loyalty. There are more than 800 breweries in China, and foreign beers account for only 5 per cent of the market. The process will be slow and plagued by the never-ending round of approvals needed from authorities ranging from the central government in Peking to the local fire service, any of whom can block a deal.

Mr Ross admits that the hefty gross margins — as high as 80 per cent — in selling premium beers could quickly fall as the market matures and competition begins to bring prices down. But that is no reason to worry. There are reckoned to be some 400 million consumers of alcohol in China; hardly small beer to any brewer.

When the bad old days look set to return

Philip Bassett on the economists who fear a repeat of the crises of the 70s

Inflation at 25 per cent. Public sector borrowing at 10 per cent of GDP. Public spending consuming half of Britain's national output. And rapidly rising unemployment. Sound familiar? No? And yet a new study is suggesting that Britain could be returning to the economic and industrial crises of the 1970s, when the economy looked like this.

Twenty years ago, two Oxford academics, Robert Bacon and Walter Eltis — who went on to become the director-general of the now-scrapped National Economic Development Office and subsequently chief economic adviser to Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, when he was at the Department of Trade and Industry — put forward a highly influential theory about British industry and the British economy, advanced first in articles in *The Sunday Times* and then as *Britain's Economic Problem: Too Few Producers*.

What the Bacon and Eltis thesis, as it became known, essentially said was that Britain's "market sector", comprising private business plus the trading parts of the public sector, was being economically crowded out by the over-rapid expansion of the non-market sector, and was becoming too weak to generate the required investment and employment.

Their solution — put forward as non-political but which had considerable influence on Conservative policymakers in the run-up to the watershed 1979 general election — sat neatly with the revival in Conservative thinking along the same lines: restraining the public sector, reviving private enterprise and cutting back on direct taxation.

Now Bacon and Eltis have gone back to their mid-70s views — and end up giving warning of the possibility of Britain slipping back economically to those times.

Since their first theories, and especially after what happened to the UK economy during the Thatcher years of the 1980s, other economists have suggested that their views simply caught an anti-statist moment; that the expansion of the tax-financed sector was not the main cause of Britain's slow growth, and that the real

Outcome of the election, and what follows, will be proof

problem was low productivity growth, independent of the proportion of consumption which is tax-financed.

Even if that is so, Bacon and Eltis, as Lord Skidelsky writes in an introduction to their revisiting of their views, clearly "helped create an intellectual climate favourable to 'Thatcherism'". Now, even policy proponents on the Right acknowledge that much of the intellectual thrust in politics and the economy is clustering round Tony Blair's new Labour.

Giving warning of a "return to the destabilisation sequence from which Britain began to suffer in the 1960s and 1970s", Bacon and Eltis suggest that two significant developments would first have to occur: extra public spending would again be allowed to "cream off" most of the fruits of economic growth, and a future government would return to becoming an employer of last resort to bring unemployment back to the far lower levels of the 1950s and 60s. All three main political parties say they

have no intention of doing anything to promote such developments. But a future Labour government is likely to face strong pressures for higher public spending, despite the pledges of Mr Blair and Gordon Brown, his Shadow Chancellor. Equally, Labour is under pressure to commit itself to re-promoting full employment.

"Many in economics and politics forget previous disasters and the political and intellectual battles which had to be won to re-establish the foundations of a viable economy," Bacon and Eltis write now. "Another crisis like those the UK survived in 1976 and 1979 could recur if the combination of policies which destabilized the economy in the 1970s is allowed to re-emerge."

The outcome of the election, and what follows, will be the proof of that. In the 1990s, the Bacon and Eltis thesis is unlikely to have the same resonance. But authors are sticking to their last — and say the poor performance they identified lies lurking, waiting to return.

□ *Britain's Economic Problem* Revisited: Robert Bacon and Walter Eltis. (Macmillan Press: £45 and £14.99.)

BUSINESS LETTERS

Subsidy dangers of electricity at below its real cost

From the Chief Executive, Association of Electricity Producers
Sir, The Energy Intensive Users' Group (EIUG) is right to demand liberalisation of European electricity markets. Monopoly vested interests are denying customers a choice of suppliers and British businesses with operations elsewhere in Europe are paying the price for that.

It is unfortunate, however, that the EIUG used the occasion to take yet another

swipe at the British electricity market ("Large users press for action power pool", May 2). Britain has led the way in liberalising electricity markets and customers are enjoying the benefits. As recently as April 30, the electricity regulator's annual report confirmed that there is increasing competition in generation and supply and that "real prices to industrial customers were between 4 per cent and 13 per cent lower than in the previous year, some 14 per cent to 20 per cent lower than at vesting"

(1990). I am far from certain that the large users want market prices. I suspect that they simply want electricity at below its real cost. That means subsidies, paid for by others, but it would be a rather confusing message for our European partners. Yours faithfully, DAVID PORTER, Chief Executive, Association of Electricity Producers, 1st Floor, 41 Whitehall, SW1.

Scrip madness

From David Lindsay
Sir, Yet another scrip dividend alternative in the mail today! Why this mad corporate scramble to raise unpredictable amounts of additional capital for unspecified purposes?

I know it enables shareholders to avoid stamp duty and dealing costs and the company to reduce ACT liability, but is that enough to justify dispensing with the usual discipline of issuing a prospectus when raising fresh capital? Is it good for a company that its capital base should jerk up unevenly and its board then have to invest on the hoof like a bank or building society, except that this is money with no strings attached? Hardly the responsible investment the Government should be encouraging. Will other shareholders join with me in voting against these schemes until Government, the Stock Exchange or a business academic explains why they are such a good thing? Yours faithfully, DAVID LINDSAY, 36 Orchard Coombe, Whitechurch Hill, Reading.

Health warning

From Dr Graham Jackson
Sir, Commenting on BAT's profits, Tempus (May 2) suggests that "investors should not be fooled into believing tobacco is a dying industry". Unfortunately, from a medical viewpoint, that is exactly what it is. Yours faithfully, GRAHAM JACKSON (Consultant Cardiologist), Guy's Hospital, St Thomas Street, SE1.

Compass point

From Mr Bernard Selwyn
Sir, Pennington (May 10) mentions Compass Group's purchase of Fine and Gunter which is responsible for the catering at Twickenham.

In 1758, Ann Gunter, married Domenico Negri, a confectioner from Turin. They opened a shop in Berkeley Square, where it existed until 1931. They had no children but Ann brought nephews and nieces into the business and one, James Gunter inherited it. He, his son Robert and a second cousin John Gunter developed the firm and, to supply the produce, acquired enormous areas of market garden land at Earls Court, Chelsea and Fulham. The family found that building on this land could generate a more profitable income than the shop and the business was sold in the last century.

John would have felt at home in the head office of Compass, overlooking Hamersmith Bridge. He was on the old bridge management committee company for many years. Yours faithfully, BERNARD SELWYN, 3 Hogarth Road, SW5.

Eurotunnel struggle

From Mr Desmond J. Weaver
Sir, I refer to Pennington's "Light at the (Euro) Tunnel's End" (May 8). What a shower we British are when it comes to organising ourselves to fight for a fair deal for shareholders — those forgotten people who put up lots of cash to get the finest civil engineering project in the world completed against all possible odds. I am extremely glad that, in this instance, we are outnumbered, on at least a four-to-one ratio, by our French colleagues, who, true to form, are prepared to take to the streets in support of the common cause. *Vive la difference!*

Much as I admire their determination, it is nothing compared with the forthright leadership of Sir Alastair Morrison, who, with typical flair, decided that a settlement to the financial crisis should be negotiated under French law, where shareholders' rights are at least given fair weighting. Under British law, we all would have been dead and buried by now by the banking consortium. When the banks called for Sir Alastair's head a few weeks ago, it was obvious that he must be doing too good a job for shareholders. Well done, Sir Alastair!

But what for his future once this final problem is solved? I understand that within 12 months, there might well be a vacancy in very senior government — a far less onerous job. Yours faithfully, DESMOND J. WEAVER, 4 Mavis Grove, Rhwibina, Cardiff.

Protection for Lloyd's policyholders an issue

From Mr John Higgins
Sir, In your account of the prospective Lloyd's settlement no mention is made of the interests of past and future policyholders ("Lloyd's names thrown £1.2bn lifeline", May 6). If the risk and liability that the names contracted to accept is now to be capped, this must

have an important impact on policyholders and future premiums. Who is protecting their interests in the current negotiations? Yours faithfully, JOHN HIGGINS, Friern Cottage, Doctors Commons Road, Berkhamsted, Herts.

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Optimism at Compass after 118% increase

By Philip Pangalos

FRANCIS MACKAY, chief executive of Compass Group, the world's biggest contract caterer, is confident of prospects after acquisitions, strong organic growth and improved margins helped the group to more than double first-half profits.

The company, which last year paid £589 million to acquire Eurest, the French catering arm of Accor, saw pre-tax profits advance 118.7 per cent to £67.8 million in the six months to March 31.

Turnover, which was boosted by acquisitions, expanded by 67.9 per cent to £1.24 billion.

Mr Mackay said: "We saw strong organic growth in all the group's divisions and an excellent first half-year contribution from Eurest International. We are going to focus on gripping some of the organic growth opportunities we've got."

Mr Mackay sees scope for further margin improvement. He said the improving trend in the current margin, of just over 5 per cent, is expected to continue in the second half.

Substantial margin growth is expected in Scandinavia, while improvement is also expected in the potentially huge United States market.

Compass also expects to see a big increase in market share in Germany, the biggest market in Europe and the least contracted. Mr Mackay said: "The recession in Germany has made companies there very wary of outsourcing, but we expect this to turn as the economy improves. There is a strong growth rate to come through in Germany."

Mr Mackay added that the company will concentrate on

organic growth in the next couple of years, but said that "infill acquisitions" are still possible.

Mr Mackay is optimistic about the future. He said: "We are very positive on prospects. The major engines of the group have a lot of growth potential; we look forward to a period of further progress."

The disposal of Compass's healthcare division to management in December for £178.8 million led to an exceptional profit of £20 million.

For shareholders there is also an improvement in the half-year dividend. An interim of 2.75p (2.45p) is payable on July 29 from adjusted earnings of 17p per share, an increase of 11p per share. On the stock market, Compass shares closed 7p lower at 528p.

Business letters, page 29



Francis Mackay, left, and Roger Matthews, finance director of Compass, reported upper-crust earnings

Time clocks up 33% profit rise

By Clare Stewart

SALES of luxury watches helped Time Products to achieve a 33 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £16.6 million.

Demand for its Audemars Piguet and Piaget brands, top models of which sell for a few hundred thousand pounds apiece, helped the group to shrug off losses in America.

The results came in well ahead of City forecasts, with turnover up 14 per cent to £91 million and earnings 26.8 per cent ahead to 20.24p.

The final dividend is 6.5p, making a total for the year of 10p, against 9p in the previous year.

Marcus Margulies, chairman, said that the luxury watches business was very strong.

He reported good progress in both the UK and North America, although he said that the strong Swiss franc had made the Swiss market more difficult.

Time Products' main market brands in the UK recorded significant turnover and profit growth, helped by the performance of the market leader, Sekonda, which sold 1.7 million watches last year.

Shares in Time Products rose 13p to 348p yesterday.

Fine Art tops City forecasts

By Fraser Nelson

SHARES in Fine Art Developments, the mail order and greetings card group, jumped 15 pence to 498p yesterday, as it reported a 16 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £395 million for the year to March 31, significantly better than City forecasts.

Sales from card and paper products rose by 18 per cent to £181 million, lifted by the group's growing presence in America. UK sales grew by 20 per cent, helped by a sharp increase in demand for branded cards from WH Smith and Marks & Spencer.

Operating profits in Fine Art's mail order division rose 4 per cent to £24.9 million, despite suffering a serious

setback from the French postal strike last summer. Overall, sales in the division rose by 15 per cent to £214 million.

UK mail order sales were lifted by the introduction of a 'structured credit' scheme, which drew an increase in spending per customer by including new catalogues with clients' monthly statements.

The company said that the scheme, which brought in 69 per cent of mail order sales, was made feasible by a shift in its customer base from agents to individual buyers.

Keith Chapman, chairman of Fine Art, said that the company planned to invest heavily in its self-help division, which supplies fundraising catalogues to

churches, schools and charities who retain 25 per cent of sales. He said British schools, hit by drops in government funding, were turning to charity catalogues to raise cash.

"We are getting to the stage where the Government cannot fund everything that is required," he said. "Self-help is the logical way forward, and with our charity catalogues, we are ideally placed in this growing market." He added that the company did not expect the situation to change under a Labour government.

Earnings were a new high of 43.86p a share, a rise of 35 per cent. A 12.5p final dividend, lifted from 11.8p, makes a total of 16.5p, up from 15.3p.

Europe barring low air fares, says British Midland

By Harvey Elliott, Air Correspondent

EUROPEAN airline passengers are being denied lower fares because state-owned airports on the Continent are deliberately stifling competition. European labour laws are also forcing airlines to pay very high wages and redundancy payments, which prevent genuinely low-cost airlines from operating profitably, according to Sir Michael Bishop, chairman of British Midland, the airline operator.

The cost of operating from a European airport, Sir Michael said, was up to 40 per cent higher than it was in Britain — and would remain so until airport monopolies were broken up.

"British airlines cannot get their costs down to the levels of the American operators, but, in turn, the Continental Europeans don't even begin to approach the UK's own low costs," he said.

Sir Michael said that, with

almost every charge — including landing fees, ground handling charges and catering — kept artificially high through a lack of competition at Europe's state-owned airports, there was little chance of any new airlines being able to offer low fares and make a profit.

British Midland, he said, therefore preferred to operate out of Heathrow, where landing fees were now among the cheapest in the world, and other British airports, where fierce competition enabled airlines to buy all their ground services at the cheapest rate.

Sir Michael was reporting big growth in profit and turnover for British Midland's parent company, Airlines of Britain Holdings. Group pre-tax profits were £6.2 million last year, up from only £300,000 in 1994. The number of passengers carried increased 10 per cent to 7.2 million.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Transmissions losses offset Alvis advance

SHARES in Alvis, the defence equipment manufacturer, fell 14½p to 135p as continued losses at the group's transmissions business offset a surge in first-half profits. A strong performance from Alvis Vehicles, which maintained a healthy level of deliveries of Scorpion and Stormer armoured vehicles to overseas customers, helped to drive pre-tax profits up to £5.05 million (£1.8 million) in the six months to March 31.

Turnover was £55.1 million (£37.3 million). However, losses at Alvis Transmissions, including restructuring costs exceeded £2 million because of lower than expected sales and a number of one-off charges. Further losses at the operation are expected in the second half, before an anticipated improvement the next year. Alvis had net cash of £23.3 million at the half-way stage. An interim dividend of 1p (0.75p) is payable on September 9, from earnings of 6p (0.9p).

Concentric advances

CONCENTRIC, the engineering products company, lifted pre-tax profits 3.3 per cent to £5.34 million in the six months to March 31, in spite of a decreased contribution from its core UK sector. A lull in demand from UK car manufacturers and increased pressure on aluminium margins reduced UK turnover to £48.5 million, a fall of 5 per cent. Overseas sales grew 20 per cent to £26.1 million. Earnings rose to 6.58p a share (6.37p) and there is an interim dividend of 2.05p (1.95p).

Clyde in Australian bid

CLYDE PETROLEUM, the UK oil exploration and production company, has made a \$172.8 million (£91.4 million) bid for Crusader, an Australian oil and gas group. The offer of \$1.62 a share is backed by Triton Energy, which owns 49.9 per cent of Crusader. The acquisition would give Clyde a fourth production base, adding to its interests in the UK, The Netherlands and Indonesia and increasing its overall oil and equivalent reserves by 30 per cent to 130 million barrels.

Ferguson in the red

RONNIE IRVING has quit as managing director of Ferguson International, the labels, printing and publishing group that has reported losses of £1.1 million for the year to February 29 (pre-tax profit £12.8 million). Operating profits for the year were £13.6 million, but there were net exceptional charges of £11.7 million against disposals. There is a final dividend of 8.75p a share, payable on July 10. The total is unchanged at 13.25p. There was a loss of 11.9p a share (earnings of 23.5p).

Greenway Holdings slips

GREENWAY HOLDINGS, the waste oil recycler, saw its pre-tax profits fall to £750,000 in the year to March 31, from £1.82 million in the previous 12 months. Eugene Quigley, chairman, blamed the fall on reduced sales volumes and increases in overheads at Precision Oils, which Greenway bought in February 1995. Earnings per share fell from 6.62p to 2.58p. A final dividend of 1.5p per share is to be paid on July 16, making a total of 2p, a fall of 0.5p.

Talks on duty-free outlets

ALLDERS is in talks that could lead to it selling Allders International, its worldwide duty-free outlets. With a turnover in excess of £650 million, Allders is the largest duty-free retailer in Britain and the second largest in the world. Latest annual results for the year to September 30, 1995, showed the group suffered an 8 per cent fall in pre-tax profits to £23.5 million, from £25.5 million, largely because of the effects of higher than expected opening costs and the warm summer.

Chrysler splits stock

CHRYSLER, the carmaker, surprised Wall Street yesterday by announcing a two-for-one stock split and a one-sixth rise in its quarterly dividend. Robert Eaton, chairman, told Chrysler's annual meeting that the group would split its stock and boost its dividend to 70 cents a share, from 60 cents on a pre-split basis. With the dividend previously at triple the level at this time two years ago, Wall Street analysts had expected little if any pressure on the carmaker to raise its payout.

New offer for Elys

THE battle for Elys, the Wimbledon department store, took a new twist yesterday with a recommended bid by Morleys, a private company with four department stores in London's suburbs. The offer of 60p per share compares with an average 600p offered by Panther Securities and rejected by Elys. Andrew Perloff, Panther's executive chairman, said it was considering whether to increase its two-tier offer of 750p for one of every three shares held and 485p for the balance.

N Brown buys Sartor

N BROWN, the catalogue home-shopping group, has acquired Sartor, a privately owned mail order business based in Bingley, West Yorkshire, for £6 million. Founded in 1917, Sartor supplies garments from a range of catalogues aimed mainly at the over-50s and which includes John Harvey and Watkins & Cole. In the year to June 30, 1995, turnover was £9.7 million and adjusted profits were £900,000 before tax. Sartor has a database of 700,000 customers.

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CHANGING TIMES

LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES

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LEGAL NOTICES

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 1985 AND IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 1985
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a meeting of the Creditors of the above Company will be held at 11.00 a.m. on 18 May 1996 at 11, Crown Court, London EC2A 4PU for the purpose of receiving a statement of affairs and for the purpose of appointing a Liquidator or Liquidators.

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LEGAL, PUBLIC, COMPANY & PARLIAMENTARY NOTICES

TO PLACE NOTICES FOR THIS SECTION PLEASE TELEPHONE 0171-782 7344 OR FAX: 0171-782 7827

Notices are subject to confirmation and should be received by 2.30pm two days prior to insertion.

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MALAYSIA CALLING THE PHILIPPINES CALLING SAKHALIN CALLING



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CABLE & WIRELESS

Shares halve earlier losses

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

1996	Low	High	Company	Price	Change	%	PE
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES							
106	480	480	Adnams Ltd	480	0	0	17.7
63	200	200	Brewery Co	200	0	0	28.8
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GOOD



Students at King's College, Cambridge: the ancient university has retained its reputation for academic excellence

Old rivals still close

Cambridge and Oxford remain locked together at the top of the *Times* university league table. Even with two new indicators and a different source of information, only five points out of 1,000 separate the ancient rivals.

The two universities have drawn further ahead of Imperial

John O'Leary on winners, also-rans and losers in the new *Times* table

College, London, in this year's rankings. There has been considerable movement elsewhere at the top of the table, with St Andrews leaping 11 places to join Edinburgh

to degree classifications and graduate employment records, Manchester Metropolitan University has the best score. Glamorgan, Paisley, Nottingham Trent, Sunderland, Kingston and Strathclyde are all close behind.

Paisley and Abertay have moved off the bottom positions they occupied last year. Humberstone and Luton, which replace them, both suffer under the new system of collecting data on accommodation and staffing levels.

As in previous years, the table omits university institutions such as Cranfield and the London Business School, which are wholly or predominantly postgraduate, and also omits the Open University, which restricts itself to distance education.

The table, which will also appear on the *Times* Internet

'No former polytechnic finished ahead of a traditional university'

ed as a signpost for students considering a university application. It gives a broad indication of a university's standing, but can only be the starting-point for more detailed inquiries.

Substantial changes in the ranking can be expected next year, when new research

assessments and more detailed ratings of teaching quality will be available. There may also be a wider spread of scores, as some universities

are forced to cut back on areas such as staffing levels and library spending.

Only this week, an adjournment debate in the House of Commons focused on the worsening financial prospects for the nine Yorkshire universities. Professor Gareth Roberts, the Vice-Chancellor of Sheffield University and chairman of the vice-chancellors' national committee, said a 28 per cent decline in the funding for each student during the past six years was endangering quality.

□ *The ranking is one of the features of a paperback book of The Times Good University Guide, which will be published by Times Books at the end of the month. It will be on sale in bookshops and can be ordered by phone on 01525 851945.*

THE TIMES LEAGUE TABLE 1996: HOW THE UNIVERSITIES COMPARE

	Staff/student ratio	Library spending	Teaching Assessment	Overseas Students	Graduate Employment	Research	Value Added	1995 Score
	Score 1995/100	Score 1996/100	Score 1996/100	Score 1996/100	Score 1996/100	Score 1996/100	Score 1996/100	Score 1996/100
1 Cambridge	100	93	89	91	100	86	100	51
2 Oxford	88	75	100	88	97	80	88	60
3 Imperial	76	100	44	34	96	65	74	77
4 Edinburgh	72	74	35	40	93	58	45	77
5 St Andrews	73	82	37	100	98	60	40	75
6 LSE	83	42	89	37	98	75	30	70
7 York	74	68	32	79	99	55	44	71
8 Warwick	73	58	28	59	95	55	38	78
9 Bristol	73	73	38	40	88	56	48	81
10 Nottingham	75	61	34	43	94	57	40	80
11 UCL	89	89	29	29	93	59	50	67
12 Bath	76	51	34	34	88	57	40	86
12 Manchester	72	65	35	43	93	55	32	74
12 Southampton	71	69	33	36	92	56	33	72
12 UMIST	70	62	23	46	77	61	53	74
12 Durham	74	44	26	52	94	58	31	83
17 Newcastle	69	70	37	44	80	58	34	72
17 Lancaster	70	34	34	60	91	56	26	83
17 Birmingham	75	48	39	37	83	55	36	79
20 King's College	69	58	35	10	84	60	37	79
20 Glasgow	71	61	34	27	88	58	42	74
20 Sheffield	74	45	29	38	91	55	31	79
20 Sussex	73	41	38	38	77	59	41	69
24 Liverpool	69	60	28	28	83	55	28	79
24 Royal Holloway	71	42	32	41	79	56	39	69
24 Surrey	65	38	30	51	83	57	35	88
24 Leeds	72	52	32	40	86	56	35	69
24 Reading	67	47	31	43	80	55	35	73
29 Essex	67	37	28	46	78	61	30	73
30 Buckingham	42	51	50	62	79	100	16	91
30 Dundee	55	69	35	26	79	50	33	89
32 Stirling	63	39	30	53	89	50	28	82
32 East Anglia	69	43	30	40	84	50	30	72
32 Aston	70	31	38	45	69	50	33	83
35 Aberdeen	66	46	32	38	84	51	25	79
35 Loughborough	66	51	27	34	74	50	34	78
35 Exeter	68	38	27	47	76	50	35	76
39 Brunel	63	31	28	44	75	50	31	89
39 Cardiff	67	43	25	39	80	54	28	77
39 Kent	71	37	23	47	78	62	32	80
42 Swansea	67	42	28	40	77	53	25	78
42 Queen Mary & Westfield	67	38	34	17	80	60	31	66
42 Aberystwyth	64	41	32	59	79	50	17	72
42 Strathclyde	59	37	27	17	94	51	24	75
48 City	67	21	26	31	83	51	33	82
47 Bangor	56	37	35	41	79	50	25	72
47 Heriot-Watt	51	37	22	29	83	50	35	74
47 Queen's Belfast	70	36	29	14	86	51	32	82
47 Hull	61	28	29	54	81	50	21	75
51 Keele	70	32	28	33	76	50	25	70
51 Stafford	60	36	20	55	69	52	30	70
51 Bradford	59	30	26	30	69	51	27	71
54 London Goldsmiths	55	34	27	28	74	50	28	72
54 Ulster	61	31	24	11	75	57	24	70
56 Loughborough	48	31	31	53	68	50	14	76
57 Oxford Brookes	41	30	20	23	79	60	28	65
57 Kingston	40	25	26	17	77	50	22	73
59 Coventry	44	25	20	18	77	55	18	73
60 Sheffield Hallam	43	32	21	12	73	50	14	80
61 De Montfort	45	32	20	13	72	50	21	63
62 Robert Gordon	27	36	28	24	80	50	24	73
62 Northumbria	44	30	25	10	78	50	20	72
64 Portsmouth	43	35	21	14	72	54	19	76
64 Plymouth	47	23	21	15	77	50	15	68
68 Westminster	38	26	24	9	69	50	14	63
68 Middlesex	41	25	20	11	69	50	14	63
68 UWE East Anglia	44	26	23	5	79	50	17	70
68 Manchester Metro	42	24	19	13	73	50	17	68
68 Nottingham Trent	41	23	22	14	76	50	19	71
68 Hertfordshire	43	27	24	25	72	51	19	72
68 Brighton	34	30	24	12	69	50	23	70
73 North London	42	28	22	6	72	50	23	70
74 Greenwich	40	24	20	22	74	50	16	68
74 Teesside	37	21	24	12	69	50	25	67
74 Leeds Metro	44	19	15	10	69	50	19	76
72 Sunderland	36	19	22	17	65	51	11	69
77 Central England	42	20	23	8	74	50	15	60
77 Staffordshire	40	26	22	18	69	50	13	70
80 Wolverhampton	38	16	21	15	69	54	10	66
80 South Bank	38	20	18	6	69	50	21	62
80 Napier	34	33	23	5	76	50	14	75
80 Huddersfield	44	23	19	5	74	50	15	71
84 London Guildhall	38	22	29	7	74	50	13	67
84 Anglia	38	21	20	7	77	50	17	73
84 Liverpool John Moores	44	28	18	8	69	50	16	71
84 Central Lancashire	40	21	16	18	69	50	17	70
88 Bournemouth	43	29	20	5	69	50	10	73
88 Thames Valley	35	20	26	5	69	57	10	65
88 Derby	35	23	18	20	72	60	16	56
91 Paisley	29	24	21	15	78	50	10	53
91 Abertay, Dundee	26	29	22	21	77	50	10	67
91 East London	21	24	19	5	76	56	20	63
91 Glamorgan	31	17	20	10	76	58	14	49
95 Glasgow Caledonian	38	27	20	7	77	50	18	57
96 Humberstone	40	15	14	5	69	50	10	63
96 Luton	28	17	18	5	69	50	20	73

Raw data on graduate destinations from the Universities Statistical Record and the DREF. Other raw supplied by the Higher Education Statistics Agency, which does not necessarily concur with data aggregations or manipulations in this table and is not responsible for any inferences or conclusions thereby derived.

How the league tables are compiled

Tom Cannon and Karen Smith on the changes to the ratings system

This year's ranking has seen more changes than any previous year. The most important developments are the reintroduction of a measure for teaching and the use of data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency, Department for Education and Employment and the Universities Statistical Record.

The tables used in the guide are constructed from a number of sources. The final outcome remains a "poll of polls", constructed by converting raw data described below into individual rankings. A measure of 100 does not equate with an institution achieving 100 per cent against, say, international students. It indicates that the particular university has the highest ranking of those in the table. Other universities are then measured and ranked against that institution.

The first edition of the *University Guide* included information on teaching. Its limited coverage led to the suspension of this category until better data became available. This is

now the case for a wide array of subjects.

Although some subjects are yet to be assessed, a majority of the student population is now covered by official teaching assessments and the disciplines embraced are reasonably representative of the main academic areas.

Some difficulties were caused by the different approaches to teaching assessment adopted by the separate funding councils for England, Wales and Scotland. In the guide, excellent, satisfactory and unsatisfactory ratings were given the same weighting for England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. Departments in Scotland classified as highly satisfactory were given a score at the mid-point between satisfactory and excellent. Universities were ranked on an average of their scores.

In previous years, information from individual institutions was col-

lected using a variety of sources. The collated estimates were sent to vice-chancellors to check and correct.

Some commentators questioned the consistency and reliability of this data. Professor Peter Toyn, Vice-Chancellor of Liverpool John Moores University, argued forcibly that data from official, nationally recognised sources should be used, and suggested the new Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

Collaboration with HESA, which was set up by the vice-chancellors and college principals, meant that data on staff-student ratios, student accommodation, the proportion of first class degrees awarded and the proportion of international students were available from a single source.

Information on library expenditure was supplied by the Standing Conference of National & University Libraries. Material on employment was constructed using data from the

Department for Education and Employment, and the Universities Statistical Record. The section on research was based on the last completed research assessment exercise undertaken by the Higher Education Funding Councils.

The use of these official sources adds considerably to the *Guide*. It prompted several additional changes. In the past, information on admission standards was based on grades achieved by students winning places at universities. This year, in order to use an official source, the focus shifted to grades required for admission as indicated in the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service's *University and College Entrance: official guide*. Where information was not provided in the official guide, institutions were approached about the grades expected for the same bundle of subjects. The lack of reliable data from a compara-

ble source led to the decision to eliminate data on completion rates.

Inevitably, the use of data for the first time — especially material gathered from new agencies — led to teething troubles. Some element of aggregation is an inevitable feature of efforts to present the data in easily understood and manageable forms.

This aggregation is especially noticeable in the presentation of data on employment. For the large majority of institutions, these were permanent and short-term employment, the proportion of graduates recorded as unemployed and those going on to research and further study. Short-term employment was given less weighting than permanent work.

The hardest indicator to construct is the estimate for value added. This is calculated by taking the entry standards reached in the normal year of entry and using these to project likely outcomes for completion, firsts and employment. These projections are then measured against the actual outcomes using a series of iterations.

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UNIVERSITY GUIDE

Students pick and choose

David Charter says the most popular places are not always the top flight

Britain's newest university has recorded the biggest rise nationally in demand for places so far this year. The University of Abertay at Dundee has just celebrated its second birthday as a fully-fledged university with a 6.2 per cent increase in applications. Not an astounding leap on the face of it, but universities were predicting 25 per cent fewer applicants this year because the number of course choices students can make has been cut from eight to six.

Abertay accepts that a major reason for the increased interest is its change in name from Dundee Institute of Technology — which appeared for the first time this year in the handbook for students produced by the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (Ucas).

Graham Wright, assistant principal at Abertay, says: "This is a university where the students do well on the employment front and we are working closely with schools to involve teachers directly."

Teesside, another of the most improved recruiters, puts its success down to the



A lecture at Kingston University, which improved its performance to come joint top of the new universities league

gradual impact of the name change from polytechnic to university, combined with high-profile local marketing. Nearly 40 per cent of applicants come from the area.

Innovative courses have helped to raise its profile nationally, for example its criminology programme attracts 900 applicants.

All figures are based on a Ucas report compiled on April 12. Although the leading traditional universities have increased their share of applications, a number of new

universities have done well this year. Kingston, for example, which tops *The Times* ranking for the sector with Oxford Brookes, has improved its share by 2 per cent.

Several of the large colleges of higher education have recorded the biggest gains in their share of this year's total student applications compared to last year. Roehampton Institute's market share is up 36 per cent on 1995. Bolton Institute's by 33 per cent and Nene College, Northampton, by 22 per cent.

Universities with the biggest increase in market share of applicants this year compared to their market share in 1995 (as of April 12) are Abertay (up 36.1 per cent); Cambridge (33); Oxford (23.7); Imperial College, London (17.2); University College London (14); University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (13.7); Strathclyde (12.4); Teesside (11.7); Liverpool (11.5); London School of Economics (11).

The universities experiencing the biggest decrease of market share are Anglia Polytechnic University (26 per cent down); Keele (22.2); Thames Valley (22); Buckingham (18.1); Sussex (18); Hull (16.9); Staffordshire (14.4); Bradford (13.7); Swansea (12.5); Wolverhampton (12.3).

Universities receiving the highest numbers of applications: Manchester (42,925); Leeds (41,218); Nottingham (40,514); Ulster (39,466); Birmingham (38,004); Sheffield (37,592); Manchester Metropolitan (36,594); Nottingham Trent (34,829); Bristol (32,978); Liverpool JMU (30,813).

Best of the best

With Oxford and Cambridge both improving their share of the applications market, the choice of college becomes more important than ever.

To supplement the information in Monday's *Good University Guide*, we are reprinting the latest tables of college examination results. Neither is generally available since the universities do not cooperate in their production.

The Oxford ranking is known as the Norrington Table, after its originator, Sir Arthur Norrington, a former president of Trinity College. It places colleges by awarding five points for each first-class degree, four for a 2:1, three for a 2:2 and one for a third.

The table was first suggested by Sir Arthur in a letter to *The Times* in 1963. It has been criticised by dons for perpetuating divisions in the university, and for the past three years college affiliations have been removed from examination lists in an attempt to prevent its compilation.

Cambridge's equivalent, the Tompkins Table, was devised

CAMBRIDGE	
1	(3) Christ's
2	(17) St Catherine's
3	(18) Emmanuel
4	(8) Corpus Christi
5	(2) Queens'
6	(1) King's
7	(13) Trinity
8	(11) Caius
9	(16) Downing
10	(5) Sidney Sussex
11	(15) Newnham
12	(9) Peterhouse
13	(6) Pembroke
14	(21) Fitzwilliam
15	(10) Churchill
16	(14) Jesus
17	(7) Clare
18	(24) Magdalene
19	(19) Girton
20	(20) St John's
21	(6) Trinity Hall
22	(22) New Hall
23	(12) Selwyn
24	(23) Robinson

OXFORD	
1	(7) Corpus Christi
2	(3) Magdalen
3	(13) Balliol
4	(4) Jesus
5	(1) Merton
6	(15) Exeter
7	(14) Lincoln
8	(2) St John's
9	(8) University
10	(12) Keble
11	(16) Worcester
12	(9) Christ Church
13	(18) Lady Margaret Hall
14	(22) Trinity
15	(24) Oriel
16	(11) New College
17	(6) Wadham
18	(10) Queen's
19	(8) Pembroke
20	(23) St Edmund Hall
21	(25) St Hugh's
22	(21) St Peter's
23	(29) St Anne's
24	(20) St Catherine's
25	(5) Hertford
26	(17) Brasenose
27	(28) Somerville
28	(26) St Hilda's
29	(27) Mansfield
30	(—) Manchester

by Peter Tompkins, a London actuary. Points are awarded on the same basis and college totals divided into their maximum possible score.

THE SCOTTISH LEAGUE

EDINBURGH'S undisputed dominance of *The Times* university league table in Scotland comes to an end today with the ascendancy of St Andrews in the rankings.

The two universities both improved on last year's performance to share fourth place, with strong grades for teaching assessment and quality of student accommo-

dation helping St Andrews up from 15th last year.

St Andrews has been awarded five excellent gradings for teaching in the eight departments so far assessed by the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council, compared with six out of 13 at Edinburgh.

Edinburgh was up from fifth in a good year for the

Scottish universities, with 10 out of 13 improving their table position.

The biggest leap was for Dundee, up 17 places to 30th, helped by its excellent record on graduate employment. The new universities of Napier in Edinburgh and Robert Gordon in Aberdeen also recorded impressive rises, of 13 and 12 places respectively.

What is happening outside Oxbridge and London?

Changing provinces

A CLOSER look at English institutions' rankings shows movement among both the new and traditional universities.

For the first time, York emerges as the top provincial university in a ranking that excludes Oxbridge and the London University colleges. As one of the campus universities of the 1960s, York's success in overhauling much longer-established institutions should encourage the new universities.

Warwick, one of York's contemporaries, had already achieved the feat. It now shares second place with Bristol and Nottingham.

Still a small university, York's seventh place in our main table reflects its high entry standards and successes in quality assessment ratings. Only Cambridge scored more highly for teaching.

PROVINCIAL	
1	York
2	Warwick
3	Bristol
4	Nottingham
5	Sheff
6	Sheff Hallam
7	Sheff Hallam
8	Sheff Hallam
9	Sheff Hallam
10	Sheff Hallam
11	Sheff Hallam
12	Sheff Hallam
13	Sheff Hallam
14	Sheff Hallam
15	Sheff Hallam
16	Sheff Hallam
17	Sheff Hallam
18	Sheff Hallam
19	Sheff Hallam
20	Sheff Hallam

Among the new universities, Oxford Brookes and Kingston are the nearest to catching their older counterparts. The former Oxford Polytechnic, which was second in this category last year, achieved more "excellent" ratings for teaching than any other new university and had

NEW	
1	Oxford Brookes
2	Kingston
3	Coventry
4	Sheffield Hallam
5	De Montfort
6	Robert Gordon
7	Northumbria
8	Portsmouth
9	Plymouth
10	Westminster
11	Middlesex
12	West of England
13	Manchester Metropolitan
14	Nottingham Trent
15	Hertfordshire
16	Brighton

the best graduate employment record. Kingston had the top score for the sector in research and did well on our "value-added" rating.

They all want to become doctors

Fewer potential students applied for undergraduate courses this year for the first time since the expansion of university education began a decade ago.

Medicine and dentistry remain among the most sought-after courses, with more than a dozen applicants chasing every place.

The largest growth in interest has been for courses in marketing and market research, with a 36.6 per cent rise in applications. Demand is also up for drama, by 20.9 per cent, design studies (18.6 per cent), scientific psychology (16.9 per cent), music (13.5 per cent), communication studies (11.1 per cent) and maths (9.6 per cent).

Subject areas suffering a decline this year include civil engineering (down 11.6 per cent), environmental science (11.6 per cent), social psychology (11 per cent), chemistry (10.3 per cent) and biochemistry (9.6 per cent).

The figures, from the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service, are adjusted to allow for the reduction in choices available on the Ucas form from eight to six courses.

Ucas received 341,842 application forms by its December deadline, 5,479 fewer than at that stage last year. The drop was blamed on declining interest by mature students, with 3.9 per cent more school-leavers applying.

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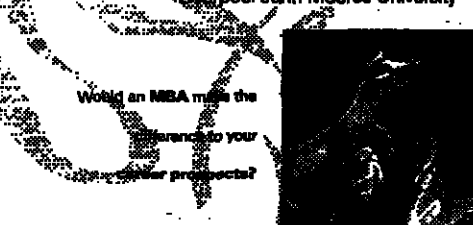
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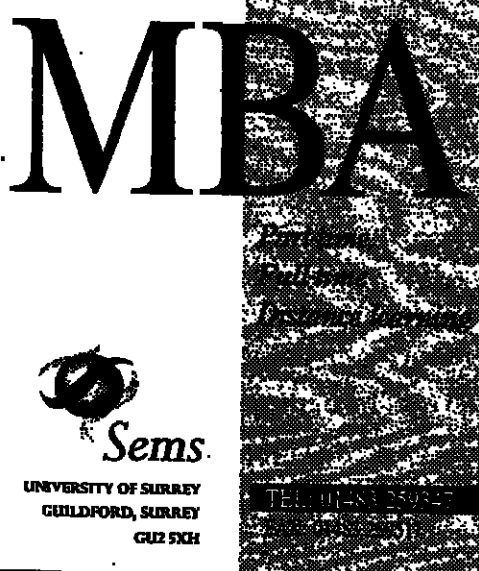
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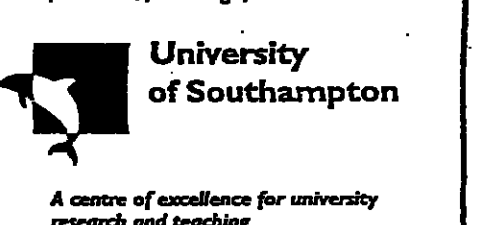


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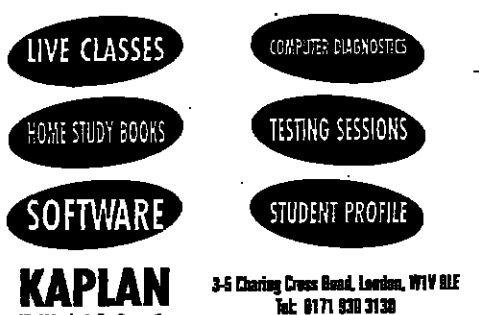
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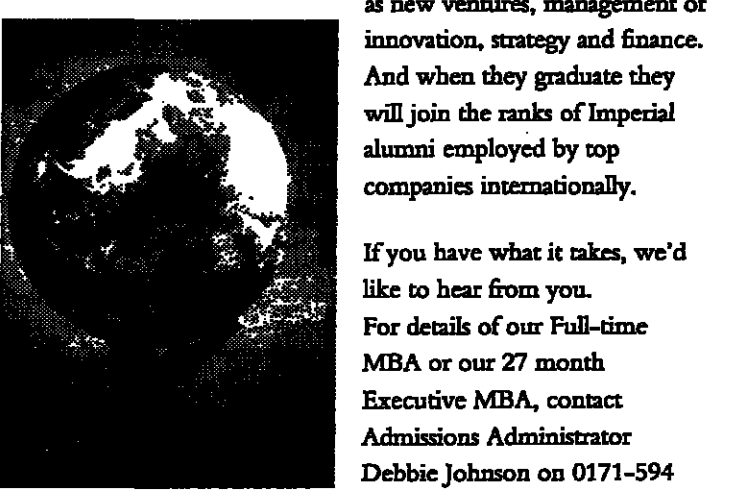
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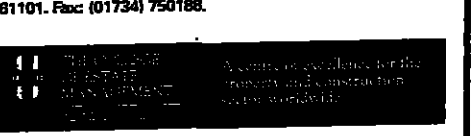
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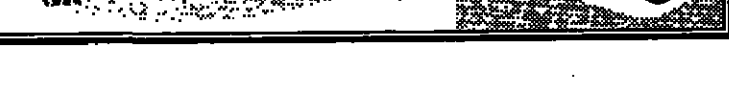
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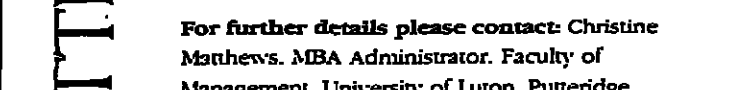
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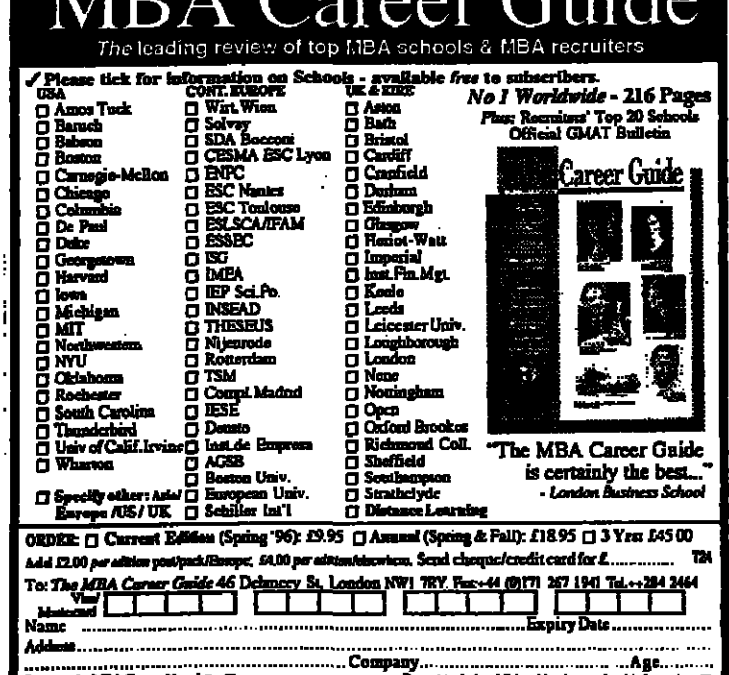


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■ OPERA

Dawn on the Downs: Miss Upshaw prepares to die nobly on Glyndebourne's opening night



■ CABARET

... while at the Café Royal Cybill Shepherd goes moonlighting into popular song with sad results

THE TIMES
ARTS

■ THEATRE 1

The RSC overplays the farce of *Three Hours After Marriage*, a rarity by Pope and Gay

■ THEATRE 2

A jewel on the Fringe: Peter Moffat displays a Pinteresque touch in his fine new *Iona Rain*

Pop of the Cork

THIS 24-year-old singer from Cork had the Jazz Café captivated with her understated, almost whispered songs that talk of the fragility of emotions and the high risk of relationships without ever descending into cliché.

Lohan demands that an audience listen to her on her own terms. She opened with a gentle, acoustic version of *Who Do You Think I Am*, the title track from her first album, which managed the unusual feat of silencing the chatterers within seconds. Tall and slender, she sang in a voice as soft as the Cork air as she ran through half a dozen mostly acoustic numbers.

Only when she had the audience hanging on her ev-

Sinead Lohan
Jazz Café

ery word did the band step up a gear with a countryish version of Bob Dylan's *To Ramona*, the only non-original song she performs. "He needs the royalty cheque," she said.

Her own songs display an astonishing maturity, tightly disciplined and never extending to five minutes when three will do. Lohan is less MOR than Mary Black, not as jazzy as Mary Coughlan and although there is a trace of both Sinead O'Connor and Dolores O'Riordan in the voice, she is more subtle than either.

The four-strong band (which includes two former members of Hector Pickaxe and his Floating Crowbars, the late-lamented and finest exponents of Irish new country) played with a quiet understatement that is rare in noisy metropolitan clubs.

At times the band sounded almost as ethereal as Buffalo Springfield from the late 1960s as guitar and keyboards lent a hypnotic quality to songs such as *See In The Bottle* and *Did I Do The Right Thing*.

By the end Lohan was rocking, albeit still in a folk style. There are appearances this summer at the Fleadh, London's biggest showcase of Irish music, and the Cambridge Folk Festival. By the autumn nobody will be asking whom she sounds like. They will be asking if the new voices from Ireland are half as good as Lohan.

NIGEL WILLIAMSON

Bring on Glyndebourne's hecklers, the soprano Dawn Upshaw tells John Higgins



"Will the first night be stormy? If it is, I will know what to expect": Dawn Upshaw looks forward to her Glyndebourne debut in the Peter Sellars *Theodora*

Dawn Upshaw is not used to playing the martyr. The American soprano, who is in her mid-thirties, has gained most of her operatic fame impersonating younger and more materialistic girls. There has been plenty of Mozart: Susanna, Pamina and the chambermaid Serpina in *La finta giardiniera*. She sings the two fluffy Sophies, in *Rosenkavalier* and *Werther*. Recently she has been establishing herself as a lady with a bit more spirit — Anne Trulove in Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* — and her recording of the opera comes out next month. Her slim figure and boyish haircut will suit her well for a sex change with her first Cherubino at the Met in the coming season.

But Handel's *Theodora*, which opens the Glyndebourne summer tonight, is a different matter. Upshaw takes the title role, a noblewoman of Antioch in AD 304, who says goodbye to worldly pleasures to defend the Christian faith in the face of Roman oppression. Inevitably she goes to her death after a lengthy duet with her counter tenor admirer, Didymus, one

of the occupation force and a late convert to Christianity.

The production is in the hands of Peter Sellars, a director who inspires fierce loyalties from many of his singers and equally fierce opposition from some of his audience. His *Magic Flute* caused ugly noises at Glyndebourne a few years ago, but the house has stayed faithful to him.

Upshaw admits to being a devotee: "We worked together on Messiaen's *Saint François* at the Salzburg Festival and in Paris, also a few months ago on a staged Bach cantata in New York. Peter has total understanding of the links between music and text. He also has an eerie instinct for what's going on in the private lives of his singers and can

turn that to dramatic advantage. He doesn't delve; it's almost a sixth sense.

"We're playing *Theodora* in contemporary dress, but it is not set in any specific time or place. Peter is making the production realistic and fluid, but he is not taking an aggressive approach. Will the first night be stormy? If it is, then I've had the experience before and will know what to expect. But we're not in it to cause a riot."

The theme of persecution in *Theodora* is one that has always been very close to Sellars's heart. Did he choose Upshaw for the title role? "I hope so. I was certainly not known as a Handel specialist. The offer came while I was in Santa Fe, singing my only other Handel, *Romilda* in

Xerxes. I looked at *Theodora* and found that it was lower and less florid. Neither of those points could be counted a minus, so I accepted."

This will be Upshaw's debut with the Glyndebourne Festival on its home ground. When it was in exile in the Festival Hall in 1993, she sang *Héro* in Berlioz's *Béatrice et Bénédict* — "Nice role. I get the best music."

In between she sold a million records with the slow movement from Górecki's Third Symphony, which took by surprise everyone from the composer and the soprano to the record label. Górecki is supposed to be producing a new work for her and the Kronos Quartet, but it has not yet arrived (surprise takes a little time to work through the

system). So some recent records have come from a totally different sphere, notably *I Wish It So*, songs from American musicals of the grittier kind which won her the Gramophone award in the music-theatre category last year. Next month sees an album of Rodgers and Hart, including some little played items.

"When I went to college, I thought my future would probably lie in stage musicals," she says. "Both my parents sang folk music, and from the age of about five I was joining in. I did some amateur productions in my teens, but once into study, I was sidetracked into Mozart and remained there for some time."

So would she take to the musical stage if the right piece came along? "Only under certain conditions, such as a performance every third night. I couldn't bear to do the same thing evening after evening. I need variety in my life and in my career."

Theodora is certainly going to provide that.

● *Theodora* opens at Glyndebourne Opera House, Lewes, East Sussex (01273 81313) tonight

Moonlighting star shines dim

THE Princess of Wales caused some merriment by loitering in an operating theatre, but it would not have been quite so funny, would it, if she had been allowed to wield a scalpel? Cybill Shepherd's presence in the Green Room is every bit as incongruous. Forget scalpels, though. The only implement this woman knows how to use is a bludgeon.

In reality, this was less a concert, more a rather crowded therapy session. Shepherd, you see, has always believed she has the ability to be a singer, and in the age of celebrity and self-validation there is no reason why she should not be allowed to go on the road with her fiancé-cum-pianist, Robert Martin.

The poor-woman's Marlene Dietrich, she puts on a fancy gown, tells a few self-deprecating jokes and expects the audience to listen sympathetically as she ruins *That's Life* and *But Not For Me*. And they do, of course, because Shepherd is a VIP and she wants everyone to join her in celebrating "the third act of this incredible career". A star — even of a middling sit-com — gets what she wants.

Viewers who saw her on

CABARET
Cybill Shepherd
Café Royal

The Gaby Roslin Show last weekend will have known what to expect: all in all, she is to singing what Roslin is to interviewing. The best way to approach the opening night was in the same resigned spirit in which the Tories greeted the local elections.

All to no avail. The live performance proved even tackier, even down to the brazen use of pre-recorded backing tracks. By turns shrill and coquettish, her voice seldom intersected with the melody; she seems to think that pitch is something that you make in a producer's office.

If you do not mind paying to gawp at a VIP indulging her hobby, go along. But you might as well pay to watch Bruce Forsyth play golf or to see Joan Collins put on her make-up. Ah, no, that is below the belt. Bruce can sink a putt and Joan looks quite nice.

CLIVE DAVIS

The iron man

FEW audiences can resist a little anarchic applause after the third movement of Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique Symphony*, so a virtuoso piano transcription of this Scherzo is likely to provide a surefire send-off for any recitalist. And this was how 24-year-old Arkady Volodos chose to make his mark in his London debut.

It was almost as if he felt he had to justify the hype which had heralded him — and, indeed, the august presence of colleagues and companions such as Nikolai Demidenko and Dmitri Alexeev. It was certainly a loud and idiosyncratic programme.

He began with another Feinberg transcription, this time of the Largo from Bach's Organ Trio Sonata in C major, which immediately revealed a warm-hearted performer, totally at ease with the tricky task of balancing the three-part texture of the music and folding the decorative upper voices gently into the defining song of the bass.

Schubert's E major Sonata D157 was treated as no mere piece of Schubertian juvenilia: Volodos heard the strength

RECITAL
Arkady Volodos
Wigmore Hall

and the soul of the last sonatas already in the music's harmonic adventures and fleshed them out boldly and brilliantly. Scriabin's Sonata No 5 Op 53 balanced impulsive energy with clarity of structure. Volodos has nerves and muscles of iron, and an interpretative assurance which makes you eager to hear him again.

His recital was shared with two young contemporaries from the Paris Conservatoire: pianist Jerome Pernoo and pianist Jerome Ducros. In their Cello Sonatas by Beethoven (C major) and Brahms (F major), they showed themselves to be true chamber-music players: minutely attentive, imaginatively recreative and uncovering many a forgotten voice in both cello and piano. They, too, must return soon.

HILARY FINCH

THEATRE: Satire by Gay and Pope spoilt by RSC monkey business; London Fringe round-up

Polonius would categorise this as farcical-satirical-over-the-top, and it is because of the last that Richard Cottrell's debut production for the RSC is less successful than a reading of the text had promised. The play is one of those obscure pieces the company unearthed from time to time, unperformed for centuries, and in this case worth digging out for the rare glimpse it offers of the giants of the Augustan Age having fun making fun.

Alexander Pope, 4ft high or whatever in his stockinged feet, was no physical giant, but his wit could fell a fellow the other side of town. Ridiculing a ripe collection of poseurs is the intention of the play, on which the youthful Pope collaborated with John Gay, he of *The Beggar's Opera*, and Dr Arbuthnot, the Royal Physician. Posturing lady-tragedians are no longer a menace to the stage — although, now I think about it... no, let it pass — and pompous critics, another target, have of course vanished from the earth. To

Laugh until you stop

Three Hours After Marriage
Swan, Stratford



Clive Francis, Adam Godley and Richard McCabe get silly

day there is only a little amusement to be found in these characters, who are fortunately peripheral.

The main plot shows how elderly Dr Fossil (Clive Francis) just manages to keep his newly married young wife out of the clutches of two gallants, Plotwell and Underplot, who pursue her in a variety of wild disguises. The blissfully funny climax occurs when an Egyptian mummy and an alligator are delivered to Fossil's museum. Perhaps it is only to be expected that, when the mummy case's door swings open, out shuffles Richard McCabe's Plotwell, so tightly swaddled in bandages that he must advance towards

his love in little hops. But the comedy is capped when the alligator upends itself and proves to be Adam Godley's dashing Underplot.

Francis has the look and posture of a bemused, yet

never quite undignified, old gentleman, and he gives the character a voice that sometimes sounds as if delivered by well-oiled clockwork.

Transparently sexual puns occur in the original, and

Cottrell adds others, as well as an attempt to give motivation to Susannah's choice of Fossil as husband. But Jane Gurnett's hard playing does not raise the character above the level of a calculating cipher.

However, a more serious damage is done to the play by transposing it from 1717 to the mid-Victorian era, where men's smoking caps look funny enough for farce but not a farce that exhibits such bravado about libido. As if aware that something is not right, Cottrell introduces servants barking astonishment in unison, chases around the gallery, entrances by rope and exits by trap door.

Inevitably, these measures are a waste of time. At such moments the eye turns to Tim Goodchild's astonishing set: a wall of curiosities — giant dragonflies, small dinosaurs, a giraffe and a stuffed dodo. The play itself is no dodo and misguided stuffing has distorted its shape.

JEREMY KINGSTON

Hearts' bonds dissolve in a hard rain

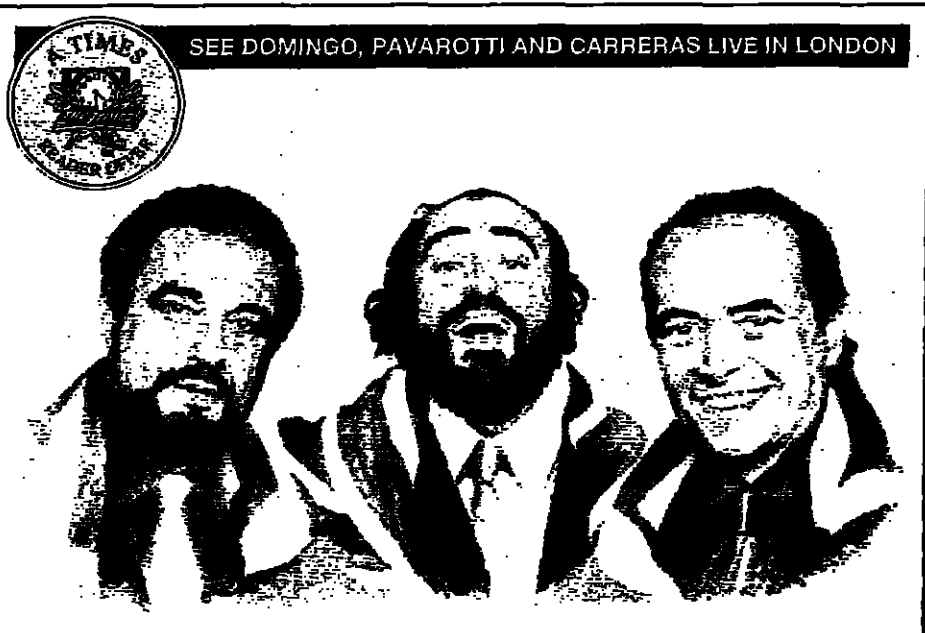
FRINGE

Tanya Scott-Wilson's crudely leering Fanny Squeers and Paul De Ville Morel's nerdy Nicholas Nickleby. There are a few amusing moments as a floppy-armed corpse gets frisky with *Martin Chuzzlewit*'s Mrs Gamp but there is no darkness or tension. The late burst of experimentalism misfires, with Nancy launching into *Stand By Your Man* as she is felled by Sykes.

However, at the Finborough Theatre in Earl's Court, the new London-based Irish company Liffey Street presents a highly commendable revival of Ger FitzGibbon's *The Rock Station*, set in 1866. Stuck in a wooden lighthouse off the West Coast, two brothers find themselves fatally entwined with Fenianism. The claustrophobic restrictions

generate the power, upping the temperature as Peter, who has tried to escape his family, quarrels with Eddie, who arrives and ransacks the place, warning of the arrival of inspectors searching for an arms cache.

KATE BASSETT



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POP 3

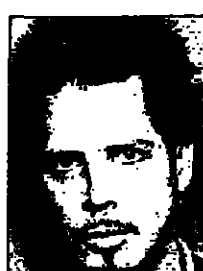
Ninety million albums later, the hard-rockin', hard-livin' show still goes on for AC/DC



POP 4

Without Richey, the Manic Street Preachers head for the big time with *Everything Must Go*

THE TIMES POP ARTS



POP 5

... but on their new *Down on the Upside* Soundgarden seem to have gone tired and puerile



POP 6

A sizzling snapshot of the club world comes courtesy of the DJ duo, the Chemical Brothers

ROCK ALBUMS

Gentle genius of the sitar

RAVI SHANKAR
In Celebration
(Angel/Dark Horse
7243 55577 2, 4 CDs)

WHEN you realise that Ravi Shankar, as a teenage member of his brother's dance troupe, used to slip into the Cotton Club to listen to Cab Calloway, the subsequent course of his career takes on a degree of logic. The seed of his fascination with other cultures was planted at the very beginning, before he took the decisive step of submitting himself to the single-minded discipline of mastering the sitar.

Judged by the brittle standards of the 1960s counterculture, Shankar was bound to appear a forbidding ascetic come down from the mountains. How else could this gentle virtuoso have coped with audiences at Monterey? Yet his instrument dissolved the barriers of language, custom and age.

That his playing goes beyond mere category is the dominant theme of this majestic retrospective, compiled in honour of his 75th birthday last year. Multi-disc collections should always be approached with caution, since producers can rarely resist the temptation to dredge up every last sliver of ephemera. In this case, Alan Kozlowski and Shankar's most famous pupil, George Harrison, have assembled the material, new and old, with exemplary care.

Rather than following a chronological line, the contents are divided into four broad categories: classical sitar, orchestral and ensembles, east-west collaboration and vocal and experimental. From the pop and jazz lover's point of view the last disc is the most provocative, with Bud Shank and Gary Peacock joining forces on *Fire Night*, and Harrison and Billy Preston contributing to the unabashedly simple theme of *I Am Missing You*.

But the essence of Shankar's philosophy is to make categories irrelevant. Whether his collaborator is Zubin Mehta, Jean-Pierre Rampal or Zakir Hussain, his music possesses the same unstoppable pulse.

CLIVE DAVIS

Starting a British tour, AC/DC talk to David Sinclair about sex and destruction

Electric Sado-land



AC/DC have survived the rock 'n' roll circus with humour and hearing intact — "We're hoping to get a pension"

around the theme of sex with dominant women. "We've found that if you're locked up for two or three months with four other guys, that tends to be the direction your thoughts take," Malcolm explains.

They are also big on destruction. The current show begins with the stage decked out as a "castle", which is swiftly and spectacularly reduced to rubble by a wrecking ball, and in the video of their last single, *Hard as a Rock*, they pulled off the same trick on the front of their record company offices. Was there any particular message in that one?

"Yeah. Wake up!" Malcolm says, without a hint of rancour. "We've never changed

record label, but they've changed over the years and sometimes they haven't quite known how to deal with us."

You can see their problem. For although AC/DC are perennially immune to shifting fashions, trying to fit them into the modern British pop landscape is no easy task.

"I've always been let down by England," Malcolm says. "We've never had any airplay there and it's never hindered us, but I've often wondered why you never hear any rock 'n' roll."

Deep Purple, Led Zeppelin, stuff like that — on the radio in England, I'm beginning to think it's a bit political, like it used to be in communist Russia."

In fact, Malcolm, who has a 15-year-old daughter and an 11-year-old son, is more in touch with contemporary pop culture than he would like to be. "I come home and it's all posters of Damon Albarn and Radio 1 and all that bubblegum shit that I hate," Angus, however, remains defiantly cocooned from recent developments: "Oasis? Something in the desert, isn't it?"

But there is one place in the media where AC/DC are always on view: proudly emblazoned (along with Metallica) on the T-shirts of those cartoon adolescent lunkheads Beavis and Butt-Head. Indeed, with their schoolboy shorts and incessant, gurgling laughter,

you inevitably wonder where their creator, Mike Judge, went for his original inspiration.

"I met the guy [Judge]," Angus says, pondering more seriously for a moment, "and I wasn't too sure if he was laughing at us or quite what the angle was. But it's nice to be part of a youth culture, if you can call it that. Or perhaps bacteria would be closer to the mark."

● AC/DC play SECC, Glasgow (June 1); Aberdeen Exhibition & Conference Centre (2); Newcastle Arena (3); NEC, Birmingham (17); Nyrce, Manchester (19); Wembley Arena (21, 22)
● Ballbreaker is available on cassette 7559-61780

Hacks can get it right

Even if an album is a dud, fans do not believe the reviews

THE question raised by the second successive Cranberries' album to be truly appalling is very simple: how long can a band be rubbish before everyone notices?

The answer, as so often, is a little more complicated. There are two methods of finding out if a band have run out of the spooky magic that ensures the air is filled with their aural Angel Delight for years to come: flipping up the Ceefax Top 40 (what the public think of it) and blackening your fingertips on yards of newsprint (what the critics think of it). But this is where the problems start — in the main, music journalists work at odds with the general record-buying public. The way journalists consume records and bands — an average of 70 singles

are live — they are down the front, jumping up and down, and cannot see the band anyway. And they are generally unconcerned with "progression". Some of the most welcoming albums of this year — by the Bluetones, Ocean Colour Scene, Cast and Marion — are hardly bulging-eyed forays into the Great Unknown: yet they have racked up sales by being slabs of good-natured loveliness or evocative soul-wailing. With top tunes.

The truth is that the press works wildly out of tune with the public's interest.

All the hoopla around *Parklife* was a delayed reaction to Blur's previous album, *Modern Life Is Rubbish*, which was ignored until each successive single reminded journalists just how good it was. Conversely, Oasis's second album, *What's The Story?*, was given a royal kicking by journalists miffed by Noel's fading affability and remarks about Damon Albarn and Aids. Two months later, those same journalists were reassessing the album in the light of Oasis's astonishing success — because an English band becoming huge worldwide is a thrill, and hacks are always desperate to follow the thrill.

So is it any wonder that the general public tend to ignore disparaging reviews of established artists? Most readers are aware that journalists have agendas, vendettas or vested interests. The Cranberries' *To The Faithful Departed* has, to my knowledge, received only two good reviews, but Cranberries fans are aware of a long-running feud between Dolores and the press. The fact that the record is an embarrassing mess will not be noticed for months to come yet — more than enough time for it to rack up gold-disc status. Still, Tape & Record Exchange will be busy come the summer.



CAITLIN MORAN

POP ALBUMS: Message for Richey Edwards — your old mates are ready to conquer the world

MANIC STREET PREACHERS

Everything Must Go
(Epic 483930)

THE first Manic Street Preachers album since the disappearance of guitarist Richey Edwards is released on Monday, and already rumblings of discontent from their earliest fans have been heard in the letters pages of the music press. However, complaints that the band has hung around too long and lost its revolutionary zeal only add weight to the impression that massive mainstream success is now there for the taking, a view confirmed by the magisterial sweep of the songs on *Everything Must Go*.

Sounding more than ever like Queen without the jokes on numbers such as *Australia* and the epic single *A Design For Life*, the band has honed its melodic rock style into a more coherent shape and taken a step back from the melodramatic nihilism of their last album, *The Holy Bible*. Edwards continues to exert his influence in the form of several lyrics which he left behind, and those of his disciples still searching for clues to the thoughts that burdened his troubled mind will find plenty to chew on in lines such as "Aimless rut of my own perception/Numbly waiting for voices to tell me", from *Removables*.

But for the greater part *Everything Must Go* is a confident assertion of the band's viability and determination to progress without Edwards. In particular, the Phil Spector-ish title track is a painful, but ultimately buoyant, statement of their intent to wipe the slate clean and start again: "Freed from the memory/Escaped from our history... Everything must go." It sounds like the end of an era and the start of something big.

Main Street Preachers



The Manics: without Richey but with a great new album

SOUNDGARDEN

Down on the Upside
(A&M 540 526)

OF THE three titans to have emerged intact from the grunge upheaval (the others being Smashing Pumpkins and Pearl Jam), it is Soundgarden who have ended up conforming most closely to the traditional heavy rock model.

Their fifth album casts the net a little wider than before in terms of pacing and instrumental textures, stretching the formula to embrace the ramalama punk blast of *No Attention*, the (initially) sedate Beatles pastiche, *Blow up the Outside World*, and the murky surrealism of the end section of *Applebite*. But somewhere along the

way the marvellous, weighty swing of their previous masterpieces, *Black Hole Sun* and *Fell on Black Days*, has been lost. And where the lyrics of those songs were genuinely dark and menacing, the puerile "F--- you all" chorus of *Ty Cobb* merely sounds gratuitous and rather lame.

VARIOUS ARTISTS

MIXED BY THE

CHEMICAL BROTHERS

Live at the Social Volume 1
(Heavenly HMVLP13)

IT IS not a live album, nor is the music "mixed" so much as selected, sequenced and spliced together by DJ duo the Chemical Brothers. But with tracks by Red Snapper, Eric B & Rakim, Davy DMX, Tainted Glass and many others, *Live at the Social Volume 1* is nevertheless a sizzling snapshot of what goes on at the Social, one of the essential ports of call in the club world since its inception in a dingy West End cellar in 1994.

Having worked closely with Noel Gallagher, Manic Street Preachers and the Charlatans (whose remixed *Nine Acre Dust* features on this album), the Chemical Brothers yield to none in their uncanny ability to marshal hardcore dance music that is acceptable to the rock'n'roll ear. And extraordinary things happen when they get behind the decks.

Favouring choppy funk or rock rhythms — especially on their own track *Get Up On It Like This* — as opposed to the dull, four-on-the-floor thud that is the besetting vice of so much latterday dance music, the Brothers create a seamless, rapidly shifting sequence of tracks, fired by a gradually escalating patchwork of propulsive, cross-cutting beats.

Unusually for a dance album, it absolutely and unequivocally rocks.

SUPER FURRY ANIMALS

Fuzzy Logic
(Creation CRECD190)

THE debut album by Cardiff-based Super Furry Animals sounds like a bit of an in-joke at first. An unlikely stew of glam-rock influences (early Bowie, Eno-era Roxy Music) and lysergically spun lyrics ("Gravity you just hold me down"), it comes tarted up with all sorts of odd, progressive-rock doodlings and raff touches of bubblegum pop.

But there are too many neat twists and winning choruses, such as the naggingly toe-tapping single, *God! Show Me Magic*, for Fuzzy Logic not to mean serious business. Left-field enough to be credible but poppy enough to be popular, these guys are definitely on, and on to, something.

SINGLE

RICKY ROSS

Radio On
(Epic 663135)

DEACON BLUE were always a difficult group to get a handle on: a bit pop, a bit rock, loyal to their Glasgow roots but often sounding more American than British. Now singer and songwriter Ricky Ross has embarked on a solo career and, if nothing else, he nails his colours to the mast with *Radio On*.

Beginning with a wailing harmonica, it ploughs into a taut, bluesy chord sequence lifted straight from the Keith Richards songbook and guided by Ross's languid vocal into a romping chorus with the kind of feel-good factor that pop stars, like politicians, would give anything to be able to bottle.

DAVID SINCLAIR

Elvis Costello & The Attractions

All this Useless Beauty

The New Album

nonsense prevails

Live Dates

London

Shepherd's Bush Empire

July 5th, 12th, 19th, 26th

Liverpool

Royal Court Theatre

July 20th

Glasgow

Barrowlands

July 21st



Essex enjoy no respite with Hooper in control

By JACK BAILEY

ILFORD (first day of four; Kent won toss; Kent have scored 323 for four wickets against Essex)

ESSEX and Carl Hooper have this love-hate relationship. Hooper loves the Essex bowling. Essex hate the sight of Hooper coming in to bat. Yesterday saw no improvement for the county. Not only did Essex lose the toss on a bitterly cold day, but their chilled and numb fingers were given no respite as Hooper moved past his third consecutive score of over a hundred against them in the championship.

As he is prone to do, Hooper went on to make his century a big one. He reached 155 before being brilliantly caught, just above the ground, by Nasser Hussain running round from the mid-wicket to the square leg boundary. It had been a magnificent innings — three hours and 20 minutes of wonderfully clean hitting mixed, periodically, with bouts of watchful defence.

Hooper's first scoring stroke, three balls after he entered the fray, with Kent teetering on 89 for three, was a straight six off Childs. Having thus announced himself, he went on to strike the ball effortlessly out of the ground on two successive occasions off Law and sprinkled his innings with 20 fours.

He was ably supported, in a fourth-wicket stand that realised 224 from 49 overs, by Graham Cowdrey, who was within sight of his own century when rain brought a merciful release for Essex some 20 overs early. Cowdrey has hit 14 fours so far in an innings which saw the square cover drive in excelsis, the hallmark of a Cowdrey in form.

The day had begun reasonably well from an Essex point of view. Prichard brought on

Such as early as the twelfth over and before long the tall off-spinner had Fleming, never quite comfortable in his role as opening batsman, caught behind as he tried to force on the off side.

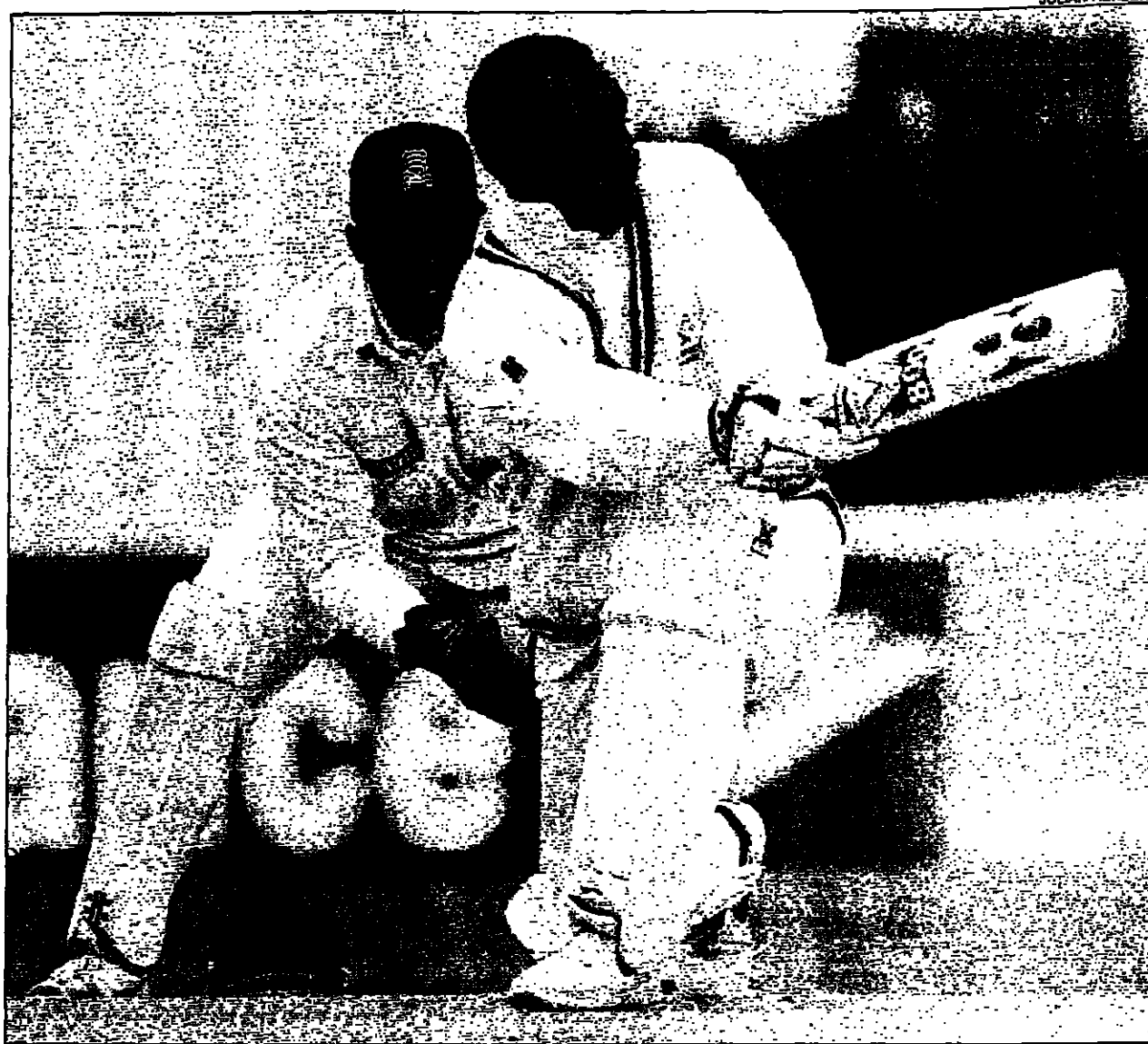
Childs removed Ward in similar manner. Ward tried to cut a ball of too full a length for the stroke and it looked as though the old combination that has served Essex so well over the years might succeed in tempting and taunting Kent into submission.

When Fulton was bowled by Such off what looked like a thick bottom edge, only 89 were on the board, despite a good pitch and a short, straight boundary, and Essex were in the ascendancy. With the advent of Hooper, however, the feckless factor did not last long. Fulton had already displayed some pleasing back-foot driving on his way to 34 and Hooper soon confirmed that there was no devil in this wicket.

He announced his intentions early, moving down the wicket to the slow bowlers, driving along the ground if he got to the pitch of the ball, lifting it over the boundary on the rare occasion when he failed to get there. His first 50 came from 69 balls and he reached it just after lunch. His second took only 31 balls and he reached 150 just 40 balls after passing his century.

Even the Essex supporters could scarce forbear to cheer as Hooper moved from 45 to 151 between lunch and tea and he and Cowdrey put on 177 in 37 overs.

□ Brian Lara was reprimanded by the West Indian board for comments attributed to him after his team's defeat by Kenya during the World Cup this year. Any future breach of contract would attract "the strongest condemnation and action", the board added.



Hooper sweeps the ball away to the boundary during a sparkling innings of 155 against Essex at Ilford yesterday

Stemp exposes Durham's wounds

By MICHAEL HENDERSON

CHESTER-LE-STREET (first day of four; Yorkshire won toss; Durham, with seven first-innings wickets in hand, are 316 runs behind Yorkshire)

IN two revealing hours last night the poverty of Durham's cricket was exposed like a painful wound. Yorkshire, nine wickets down for 225, were allowed to add a further 110 and then take three wickets, including that of Campbell, the West Indies opener, for a third-ball duck. At this rate, Durham will do well to take this match into the third day.

It should have been Chris Scott's day. The wicketkeeper established a club record when he held his sixth catch,

and he ended the Yorkshire innings with a seventh. His achievement could not mask the deficiencies of the bowling, which was too short and too wide as Stemp and Silverwood made the highest last-wicket partnership against Durham.

Stemp made his maiden half-century, 65 from 69 balls, with a freedom of stroke not often seen in a No 11. Early in his innings, he hit Boiling for a straight six, at which point Roseberry withdrew his off spinner from the attack after 34 consecutive overs. His decision was not vindicated by the triple Foster and Collingwood served up for Stemp's consideration.

By the end, Silverwood had picked up the beat and the runs the pair shared came

from only 19 overs, without a hint of slog. The bowling was so poor they proceeded comfortably at almost six an over. It was a shame Stemp had to spoil things by waving his bat at his team-mates, and nobody else, when he reached fifty but cricketers think that is the way to behave these days.

The spectators certainly deserved an acknowledgement, not least for braving a bitterly cold day. When Yorkshire lost their openers in the first three overs it seemed those hardy souls would enjoy watching their team bowl out their neighbours cheaply.

The pitch is not ideal, with some balls scuttling through and others popping, and Bevan had to play well for his 90 to hold the innings together.

Byas, leg-before to one that crept, was a shade unlucky. White, chasing a wide one, was not. In his second over after lunch, Brown beat Blakey with one that bounced and then had Morris leg before with a ball of full length. After Bevan was caught behind, Gough frolicked for a while but a score of 335 was some way off when he was eighth out at 215.

Yorkshire ended the day emphatically. Gough's third ball found Campbell in front of everything with his feet nowhere. Hartley removed Boiling, the nightwatchman, also leg-before, and earned another such decision in his net over when Roseberry shuffled across his stumps. These are dog days for Durham.

Inimitable Reeve puts his case to Illingworth

By PAT GIBSON

EDGBASTON (first day of four; Hampshire won toss; Hampshire have scored 242 for seven wickets against Warwickshire)

A COUNTY captain suggested the other day that, instead of having light meters, umpires should be given the option of leaving the field when the temperature drops below a certain level.

He has a point. It is not much fun playing cricket when it is as cold as it was at Edgbaston yesterday, although the irrepressible Dermot Reeve still found a way to put a smile on Warwickshire's faces. The man could sell refrigerators to eskimos.

The champions probably saw Hampshire in much the same light as Sussex, who had been crushed at Hove, but they were putting up much more of a fight when Laney and Smith took them past 100 with only two wickets down.

Enter Reeve, well aware of the fact that Raymond Illingworth was watching (not, significantly, in the company of his Warwickshire detractors in the committee room but from the press box at the other end) to show that he has no peers when it comes to making things happen.

In his second over, he had Smith, captaining Hampshire for the first time in the absence of the injured Stephenson, caught at the wicket as he pushed forward. In his twelfth, he dismissed Laney the same way after the determined young opener had battled for 4½ hours to equal his highest championship score of 73.

Then, as if satisfied with figures of 12-74-2 from his usual rich assortment of swing, seam and subtle variations of pace, Reeve went back to slip and let his specialist bowlers get on with the job of chipping away as Hampshire headed towards what could well be a challenging total on a pitch on which the odd ball has kept disturbingly low.

Somerset's advantage restricted by Walsh

By SIMON WILDE

BRISTOL (first day of four; Somerset won toss; Somerset, with eight first-innings wickets in hand, are 210 runs behind Gloucestershire)

COURTNEY WALSH rudely interrupted Somerset's progress at Bristol yesterday with a hostile spell in the final session of the day. Despite bitterly cold conditions, the West Indies fast bowler generated a lively pace and soon had Somerset anxiously seeking to hold out for the morning.

Walsh, who took 11 Somerset wickets on the same ground in 1994, removed Bowler, caught behind in his second over, and Hayhurst, stalling a ball to short leg in his fifth, to bring his side back into contention. Lathwell and Harden gratefully accepted an offer of bad light with six overs remaining.

Earlier, Gloucestershire, fielding only five specialist batsmen, made poor first use of a blameless pitch and were dismissed half an hour after tea for 263. While unable to rival Walsh for pace, Somerset's seam bowlers performed with commendable discipline.

Caddick, keen to make an impression on the watching England selector, David Graveney, made some deliveries rise steeply. Wright, who lost his helmet taking evasive action, found the ball taking the edge of his bat and looping to Lee at second slip.

Lee, who returned his best figures so far for the county, four for 55, struck with his third delivery, luring Symonds, who began by striking three fours off Shine, into patting back a simple return catch. He also took the important wicket of Hancock, leg before on the front foot for an excellent 89, his highest score for two seasons.

Hancock's stand of 122 in 40 overs with Russell, whose 63 was a typically belligerent effort, was Gloucestershire's only partnership of note. Once both had departed in the space of two overs, the remainder of the innings amounted to little.

House of Lords

Law Report May 17 1996

Privy Council

Disability premium not available

Bate v Chief Adjudication Officer and Another
Before Lord Goff of Chieveley, Lord Jauncey of Tullichettle, Lord Browne-Wilkinson, Lord Slynn of Hadley and Lord Hoffmann [Speeches May 16]

The claimant, who was severely disabled, was excluded from entitlement to an income support severe disability premium by paragraph 13(2)(a)(i) of Schedule 2 to the Income Support (General) Regulations (SI 1987 No 1967) because she "resided with her parents in the house owned by them within the meaning of regulation 3(1) but they did not 'jointly occupy' it with her within the meaning of regulation 3(2).

On the true construction of subsections (1) and (2) of section 104 of the Social Security Act 1975, as amended by section 21(1) of and Schedule 6, paragraph 7(1) to the Social Security Act 1990, the decision to refuse the claimant the premium had to be treated as correct at all stages of the claim process notwithstanding that a social security commissioner had subsequently decided that two other claimants in a similar position were entitled to the premium.

The House of Lords allowed an appeal by the Chief Adjudication Officer and the Secretary of State for Social Services from the Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Goff and Lord Justice Mummery and Lord Justice Millett) (The Times December 12, 1994) who had allowed an appeal by the claimant, Miss Ann Marie Bate, from the decision of a social security commissioner on January 13, 1995.

The commissioner had allowed an appeal by an adjudication officer from a social security appeal tribunal on November 20, 1990, which had reviewed his decision and awarded Miss Bate the premium as from October 9, 1989.

Mr Stephen Richards and Mr Richard McMahon for the Chief Adjudication Officer and the secretary of state; Mr David Pannick QC and Miss Bethan Harris for Miss Bate.

LORD SLYNN said that Lord Justice Millett had said that it was deplorable that legislation affecting some of the most disadvantaged people in society should be couched in language so difficult for even a lawyer trained and practising in the field to understand.

Whether in the event their Lordships wholly agreed with that view, it was underlined by the fact that Lord Justice Millett had found that the construction of the Act adopted by the commissioner was "not only unaverted by the wording of subsection (8), but is unacceptable in its effect and capricious in its application."

Income support and the severe disability premium had become payable under the Social Security Act 1986 with effect from April 11,

1988. Miss Bate had received income support from that date but initially had not been paid the premium.

At all material times she had lived with her parents in a house owned by them. Following a commissioner's decision, the *Trotman/Crompton* decision (CIS/80/1989) on May 17, 1990 that two other claimants in a similar position were entitled to the allowance, Miss Bate had applied for a review of the decision in her case pursuant to subsection (1A) of section 104, as added by section 25(1) of and Schedule 6, paragraph 3 to the Social Services and Social Security Adjudications Act 1983 and amended by section 52(1) of and Schedule 5, paragraph 10(b) to the 1989 Act, on the ground that on the basis of the *Trotman/Crompton* decision the adjudication officer's initial decision in 1988 in her case had been erroneous in law.

Subsection (1A), as amended, provided: "Any decision of an adjudication officer may be reviewed, upon the ground that the decision had been erroneous in point of law, by an adjudication officer or, on a reference from an adjudication officer, by a social security appeal tribunal."

If that had stood alone, Miss Bate was entitled to have the initial decision in her case reviewed. As subsection (1) applied, however, subsection (1) applied where in case B the commissioner or the court determined that an adjudication authority had made a decision in that case that was erroneous in law and in case A, a decision had been based on the same error of law so that, but for subsection (8), the earlier decision would fall to be revised on a review for error of law under subsection (1A).

The effect of subsection (8) was that if a question arose on the review of case A as to a person's entitlement to benefit the determination of the commissioner or court was taken as being that the decision had not been erroneous in point of law in respect of any period before the date of the determination.

The result was that the claimant in case A could not take advantage of the determination in case B retrospectively.

Regina v Guilford Justices, Ex parte Rich
When investigating the means of an unrepresented person under section 76 of the Magistrates' Courts Act 1980 justices had to give sufficient notice to that person that they were considering making a distress order.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court (Lord Justice Pill and Mr Justice Newman) so held on April 25 when quashing a warrant of

The Court of Appeal had held that subsection (7) only applied to a "question arising on the review". That was limited to review by the adjudication officer and the social security appeal tribunal in Miss Bate's case. The commissioner and the court were not conducting a review; they were dealing with matters "on an appeal from a refusal to entertain a review".

His Lordship was not persuaded that "review" was different from "appeal". It seemed to him that the various stages of reconsideration at each level, including the court, were part of one process: to see whether there was an error of law in the adjudication officer's decision.

There was no warrant for limiting the effect of subsection (8) to cases where a previous decision binding on the adjudication officer had been reversed.

His Lordship declined to draw a legalistic distinction between "found" for facts and "held" for law in subsection (8).

Accordingly, the commissioner had been right on the point and the Court of Appeal wrong. His Lordship was not persuaded that that result was incompatible with European Community law.

The effect of regulation 3 of the 1987 Regulations was that a claimant could not be treated as a severely disabled person if someone other than one of the persons specified in regulation 3(2) was "residing with him" since for the purposes of paragraph 13(2)(a)(i) of Schedule 2 that person was a non-dependant, the assumption apparently being that such a person was likely to assist the claimant to cope with his severe disability so that the premium to provide assistance was not required. But a person was not to be treated as a non-dependant if he "jointly occupied" the claimant's dwelling.

His Lordship did not see any indication that "resides with" was to be given any other than its ordinary meaning. It meant no more than that the claimant and the other person lived in the same residence or dwelling.

There was no need to read in the qualification that the household had to be that of the claimant or that the dwelling had to be one in which the claimant had the legal interest and the other person was

there in a subordinate position or without any legal interest. Accordingly, Miss Bate could not show that she had no non-dependants residing with her unless her parents were persons who "jointly occupied the claimant's dwelling".

His Lordship concluded that, as Lord Justice Hoffmann had said in *Fulwood v Chesterfield Borough Council* (1993) 92 LGR 160, "jointly occupies" involved a legal relationship; it did not involve merely factual co-residence.

With effect from December 2, 1994 by virtue of the Income-related Benefits Schemes (Miscellaneous Amendments) (No 6) Regulations (SI 1994 No 3061), following the Court of Appeal's judgment, regulation 3(1) of the 1987 Regulations had been amended by regulation 2(1) and (2) by adding after "who normally resides with a claimant" the words "or with whom a claimant normally resides," and paragraph 13(2)(a)(i) had been similarly amended.

The present question had thus been answered for the future but in his Lordship's opinion, the provision had always had that meaning.

With effect from October 9, 1989 regulation 3(2)(c) had been amended by regulation 3 of the Income Support (General) Amendment Regulations (SI 1989 No 1678) by adding after "person who jointly occupies the claimant's dwelling" the words "and either a co-owner of that dwelling with the claimant or not there are other owners" or is liable with the claimant or his partner to make payments in respect of his occupation of the dwelling."

So once again from that date the requirement of a legal relationship between the claimant and the other person was specified.

Miss Bate's case had, however, to be determined as of April 11, 1988, and their Lordships had been told that a significant number of cases would turn on the interpretation of the legislation regardless of the amendments.

Lord Goff, Lord Jauncey, Lord Browne-Wilkinson and Lord Hoffmann agreed.

Solicitors: Solicitor, Department of Social Security; Mr David Thomas, Child Poverty Action Group.

Distress order warning apt

distress issued by Guilford Justices on March 1, 1995 over a car belonging to Liam Rich who was in default of a compensation order imposed against him.

MR JUSTICE NEWMAN said that only a procedural aspect of the case gave rise to unfairness because the defendant was unrepresented and the justices had in mind to deprive him of property.

Sufficient notice had to be given to the individual so that he could give an explanation of why such an

order should not be made. No notice had been given and the warrant would be quashed and the matter remitted.

LORD JUSTICE PILL, agreeing, said that the court had to give an opportunity to those before it to make representations and that an unrepresented person should have been told that an option of a distress warrant was being considered so that he could address the court on the circumstances why one should not be made.

Wa Chau-piu v The Queen
Before Lord Keith of Kinkaid, Lord Browne-Wilkinson, Lord Mustill, Lord Nicholls of Birkenhead and Lord John May [Speeches May 14]

In dismissing the appellant's application for leave to appeal against conviction out of time, the Court of Appeal of Hong Kong had wrongly taken into account admissions that he had committed the offence made by his counsel in mitigation after conviction, holding on that basis that no miscarriage of justice had occurred.

The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council allowed an appeal by the appellant, Wu Chun-piu, from the dismissal of his application for leave to appeal out of time against his conviction on December 14, 1990 of robbery and possession of a firearm.

Section 83 of the Criminal Procedure Ordinance provides: "... the Court of Appeal shall allow an appeal against conviction if it thinks — (a) that the conviction should be set aside on the ground that under all the circumstances of the case it is unsafe or unsatisfactory ... Provided that the Court of Appeal may, notwithstanding that it is of opinion that the point raised in the appeal might be decided in favour of the appellant, dismiss the appeal if it considers that no miscarriage of justice has actually occurred."

By section 83(2) notice of appeal or application for leave to appeal against conviction had to be given within 28 days from the date of conviction or, where sentence was passed more than seven days thereafter, within 28 days from when the sentence was passed. But section 83(3) enabled the Court of Appeal to extend that time.

Mr Martin Thomas, QC and Mr Robert Britton for the appellant; Mr J. Grenville Cross, QC, Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions, Hong Kong, and Mr Darryl Saw, Senior Assistant Crown Prosecutor, Hong Kong, for the Crown.

SIR JOHN MAY said that three armed and masked men entered a night club. Three men were seen to leave and were detained by three police officers. The one alleged to have been the appellant produced a pistol and shouted that they just wanted money. The men then fled and only one was arrested. When questioned by the police he admitted the offence and implicated the appellant and his two partners.

Subsequently the appellant was arrested and when interviewed he denied being involved. At an identification parade he was identified by two of the three police officers as the man who had the gun at the scene of the crime.

The appellant did not give evidence in the trial but his girlfriend was called to give evidence in support of his alibi. At the trial the first witness, Leung Kwok-man, pleaded guilty. The appellant and Yu Sze-ming pleaded not guilty but were convicted by the jury's unanimous

verdict. Each was remanded in custody for probation on January 3, 1991. The probation report on the appellant referred to his frank admission that he was involved and the reason he had given for committing the robbery.

When the appellant came up for sentence the court had the probation report before it. In mitigation, the appellant's counsel, Mr Thomas J., said that it was apparent from the probation officer's report that the appellant had shown remorse since the conviction and he had given the probation officer the reason why he had committed the robbery.

Their Lordships did not think that the delay of some 16 months in the start and prosecution of the appeal in Hong Kong should of itself be fatal to the appellant's present appeal.

On January 18, 1991, the appellant had filed his own notice of appeal against conviction. In mitigation, the appellant's counsel, Mr Thomas J., said that it was apparent from the probation officer's report that the appellant had shown remorse since the conviction and he had given the probation officer the reason why he had committed the robbery.

His appeal was heard and in a reserved judgment on May 15, 1992, the court upheld the appeal against conviction on the ground that the judge had failed to direct the jury upon special weaknesses in the identification evidence, namely, whether the identifying police officers had colluded with each other about the case and about the identifying features and had told lies about so doing. On the retrial ordered by the Court of Appeal Yu Sze-ming was acquitted.

On May 19, 1992, the appellant applied for leave to appeal against conviction out of time. One of the grounds was identical with the same ground in the successful appeal of the third defendant. Counsel for the Crown opposed the application and concentrated his

attack upon the admissions allegedly made by Mr Yu in mitigation. The Court of Appeal refused to grant leave to appeal out of time, saying: "We are satisfied that the appellant admitted, through his counsel, that he had committed the offence and that we are entitled to take that admission into account when considering whether there has been any miscarriage of justice."

"We are satisfied that, although the point raised in his appeal might have been decided in his favour, no miscarriage of justice has occurred. In the circumstances, we are satisfied that the proper course is to refuse the application for leave to appeal against conviction out of time."

The appellant's appeal was put forward on his behalf under section 83(1)(a) of the Ordinance and was based on the contention that in all the circumstances of the case his conviction was unsafe and unsatisfactory because of the judge's failure to direct the jury about the possibility of collusion among the police officers who had given evidence of identification.

In the case of the appellant's co-defendant, Yu Sze-ming, save for the alleged admissions in mitigation by counsel, the facts and circumstances were substantially the same as in the case of the appellant, and not only did an appeal succeed but also on a retrial Yu Sze-ming was acquitted.

Their Lordships considered it to be implicit in the judgment of the Court of Appeal now appealed from that in all probability, but for the alleged admissions by counsel, the appellant's appeal would also have been allowed as had that of his co-defendant.

If that which was said in mitigation by Mr Yu in the appellant's behalf when he was brought up for sentence was to be held against the appellant to the extent contended for and indeed upheld by the Court of Appeal, then defendants and their counsel mitigating on their behalf after a

jury's verdict were in a difficulty. The inherent difficulty was, however, avoided if one considered what the real position was. Generally, at the time counsel mitigated, there had been a trial at the start of which the accused had pleaded not guilty, of itself inconsistent with any subsequent alleged admission of guilt.

Then after a guilty verdict and against that background counsel had to try to persuade the trial judge to pass as lenient a sentence as possible. Counsel had to do so in the knowledge that notwithstanding his client's original plea of not guilty the jury had taken a different view of the case.

It could frequently be unrealistic for counsel, when mitigating, to reiterate in strong terms his client's innocence and yet in the same breath to ask for leniency.

In their Lordships' view, at least in the present case, one had to ask how one should realistically interpret counsel's remarks in mitigation. Was he trying to gain sympathy and set at naught his client's original plea? Or was he bound in the circumstances to accept the jury's verdict and do what he could from that starting point to mitigate the consequences.

In their Lordships' view, in this case at least, the latter was the realistic approach and it would be unjust to attribute to the appellant from counsel's mitigation an admission that he had in fact committed the offence which he had very recently been contending against.

The Court of Appeal were wrong to dismiss the appellant's application for the reason that they gave for doing so. Their Lordships recommended that the appeal should be allowed, that leave to appeal out of time should be granted and that the case should be remitted to the Court of Appeal of Hong Kong for further consideration in the light of their Lordships' judgment.

Solicitors: Edwin Coe; Madarinas.

Listening to police radio illegal

Director of Public Prosecutions v Waite
Before Lord Justice Pill and Mr Justice Newman [Judgment May 9]

It was clear that tuning a radio scanner to a police frequency and listening to police messages when not authorised to do so was an offence.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court so stated when allowing an appeal by case stated by the prosecution against the dismissal by Nunston Justices on November 14, 1995 of the case brought against Darren Waite under section 5(b)(i) of the Wireless Telegraphy Act of 1949 Act, as amended by section 3 of the Post Office Act 1969 and the Ministry of

Posts and Telecommunications Order (SI 1974 No 691).

Section 5 of the 1949 Act, as amended, provides:

"Any person who — (b) otherwise than under the authority of the secretary of state ... (i) uses any wireless telegraphy apparatus with intent to obtain information as to the contents, sender or addressee of any message ... which neither the person using the apparatus nor any person on whose behalf he is acting is authorised by the secretary of state to receive ... shall be guilty of an offence."

Mr Malcolm Morse for the prosecution; Miss Lynn Tayton for Waite.

MR JUSTICE NEWMAN said that the words "intent to obtain information" were clear. No intent

over and above that requirement was to be imported into the section. The appellant had submitted that the police channel transmitted nothing but information and had no educational, recreational or entertainment function.

It was impossible to listen to the channel without obtaining information as to the messages transmitted on it.

The statute provided that any person who did so intending to do so was guilty of an offence. By contrast a person who chanced upon the channel while tuning a radio and passed over it could not be said to intend to obtain information and therefore was not guilty of an offence.

Lord Justice Pill agreed. Solicitors: CPS, Leamington Spa; Cocks Lloyd & Co, Newcastle.

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WORD WATCH
By Philip H...

Comings and goings and questions of guilt

I find BBC's *Airport* is growing addictive. It is not exactly witty, but it tells good stories week after week, and puts us on useful first-name terms with Heathrow ground staff if ever we happen to meet them. "Hi Garth!" we will say, as we pass through customs. "Hi Cathi!" The trick, so far, is to select personnel who are grumpy, cheerful in adversity — who take nothing personally, least of all the justified whinges of passengers. Down-to-earth is the phrase. Appropriate enough for workers whose feet never leave the ground.

Last night's star was Viv, chatty flight dispatcher, whose job was to meet a British Midland flight from Amsterdam and prepare it for take-off in 20 minutes. Viv had long curly hair in a tight pony-tail; she referred to her colleagues as "Sweet" (as in the kindly observation, "Got oil on yer nose, Sweet?"; and managed to wear a hideous uniform without letting its colours

enter her soul. Twice her flight was rescheduled, but the failure in no way marred her good spirits. She efficiently located two lost passengers ("J2A and J2B"), who had wandered off, and it was actually quite exciting.

Everyday human dramas of this sort, when well directed, make perfect television. Press photographer Dennis greeted his quota of celebrities, notably Paul McCartney, and he also made a fuss of Maurice Gibb and Lord Runcie, the former Archbishop of Canterbury. On both these occasions, he explained afterwards that he only snapped their pictures out of kindness; obviously they had no news value. "One hesitates to use the word 'has-been'," he mused, watching the recording back of the former Primate of All England.

Does *Airport* help us to understand the Heathrow runs? A baggage-handler once invited me to a car-bout sale of underwear,

and alarm clocks still warm from the suitcase, a scene that seems unlikely to arise in the course of this upbeat series. But we are promised next week that Garth, in customs, will finally strike lucky with a drugs bust. The only problem with *Airport* is that it was promised filmed last year, but we don't know when, when Hugh Grant and Liz Hurley made an appearance, was this Before? Or After? Or Ages After? I think we should be told.

A quiet, unsensational documentary from Channel 4's *Witness* last night asked what part was played in the Rwanda atrocities by the Roman Catholic Church. The fact that in 1994 thousands of Tutsi people were massacred inside church buildings, and that priests and nuns were said to be involved, pointed to complicity, if not something much worse. Tutsi guerrillas

is a country in a state of denial, in which the Archbishop of Ruhengeri exhorts people to forget the past and move on. "We must bury it," he told Hilsum — a chilling choice of words, given the famous images were seen of massacred Tutsis deliberately left unburied as a simple and brutal witness to fact.

Hilsum's compassion for the Tutsis meant that the human dimension made most impact in Rwanda: the *Betrayal* than any indictment of the Church. A nun remembered watching killings, which she described as "extremely banal, like killing rats". If people stood by and watched, however, Hilsum could understand. Having herself been present at the time of the massacres, she could testify to her own failure of courage, which was helpful. Nobody dared protect the Tutsi. "If they found you harbouring your friend, they

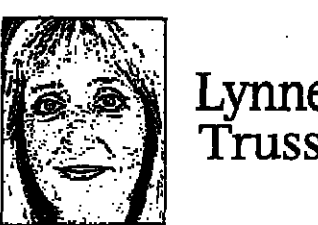
would make you kill your friend," she explained. At the end, she said: "The punishment for survival is having to live."

Questions of guilt and innocence are rather simpler in *EastEnders* (BBC1), especially where the Walford crew are concerned. For many months now the viewer has waited in straining frustration and weary disbelief for Willy Roper's reappearance, in fact a full six months ago my niece told me with startling equanimity that if Willy Roper were to come into her living room, she would kill him. But it's always the way with big build-ups. Now Willy is finally nailed as a cheat and a liar, it's like the week after Christmas. The big scene between Arthur and his old chum — "So it was you! You watched them take me away!" — took place on a windy street corner, just to underline how pathetic it was. Meanwhile, Mark

(who incidentally didn't cotton on about Willy for months) keeps smirking smugly: not an attractive sight.

I feel terribly jerked around by the reappearance of Arthur. We have already had the reappearance of Frank Butcher to contend with, and it's like watching reamants sliding down to dinner with the quick — it breaks through the fabric of soap opera reality. But at the same time, the writers of *EastEnders* know what they are doing, and I applaud the realistic cartoon storyline about Phil's disgruntled daddyhood, as Kathy grows ever more besotted and Madonna-ish, and Uncle Grant gets so soppy about the cradle that his eyes cross. Phil's voice is so deep and husky at present that it hardly registers at all; meanwhile, close observation reveals that his right arm has been replaced by a false one, bent at the elbow, with a pint glass welded into the end.

REVIEW



Lynne Truss

David Thacker's impressively-cast production, which concludes today, is a tribute to the resources which the BBC is willing to devote to drama for schools. Now, having given schoolchildren the first pick, it must make the project available to a wider audience. Dramatic offerings far worse have been screened on BBC2 at peak hours.

Perhaps Arthur Miller's play, an ironic tilt at the American dream, tends to wear its message on its sleeve but there is no doubting its power, nor that Thacker, Warren Mitchell as the doomed Brooklyn salesman, and the other actors have done it justice. The minimal set may have been dictated by the budget. But the stark lighting is wholly appropriate to the theme, emphasising the claustrophobic relationships of a family at the end of its emotional tether.

CHOICE

Death of a Salesman BBC2, midday

Kenneth Baker, the former Cabinet minister and cartoon buff, looks at how cartoonists over the centuries have dealt with royalty. It is a companion series to Baker's treatise on the cartooning of the prime minister, and tells a similar tale. The 18th and early 19th centuries were a golden age, when the savagery of the pen had few inhibitions. Monarchs were relentlessly attacked both for their public policies and private indiscretions. The rudeness level makes recent criticism of the royals seem tame. But it has to be said that the behaviour of the gross and adulterous Prince Regent, in particular, gave cartoonists rich material. Baker is knowledgeable guide, ever alive to the ability of cartoons to reflect popular attitudes of the day.

Murder Most Horrid: A Life Or Death Operation

BBC2, 9.00pm

Kate Marshall (immediately recognisable, through voice and shape, as Dawn French) is a casualty surgeon. Ten years ago her inexperience led to the death of a patient. Now, inexplicably but essential for the plot, the man's widow (Brigit Forsyth) turns up to confront Dr Kate and threaten a new inquiry. The resourceful medic's reaction is to jump into her four-wheel-drive and mow the wretched woman down. And this is a comedy, for heaven's sake! Well, just about, though of a very dark hue. The running joke, if you can call it that, is about a corpse that inconveniently refuses to die. The writers, Mark Burton and John O'Farrell, not only keep it going but supply a nicely ironic punchline. They also, biting the hand that is feeding them, take a bit at television shows which turn medicine into showbusiness.

Life After Birth

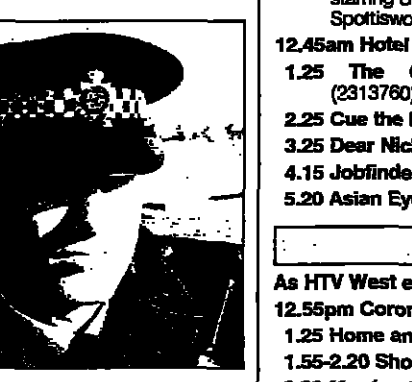
Channel 4, 9.30pm

Single mothers living in council flats have been the stuff of gritty documentaries and right-wing condemnation but less often material for sitcoms. The gap has now been filled, with a perceptive drawing on personal experience, by Teresa Poland and her co-writer, Simon Black. Admitted, played by a promising young actress, Emma Cunniffe, gets pregnant at 20 without meaning to and brings up the baby with her flatmate, Judith (Paula Bacon). Judith's sexual behaviour is just as casual, except that she does not get caught. Upholders of traditional morality may be appalled, so might those offended by forthright language. But given that plenty of Alisons exist in 1990s Britain, they are a legitimate subject for comedy and the show cannot be accused of romanticising them.

Peter Wyndham

6.00am GMTV (816302)

- 9.25 Supermarket Sweep (s) (744361)
- 9.55 Regional News (Teletext) (2000272)
- 10.00 The Time... the Place (s) (6350949)
- 10.35 This Morning (5077754)
- 12.20pm Regional News (Teletext) (1774814)
- 12.30 News and weather (Teletext) (4433037)
- 12.55 Entertainment Today (s) (4411098)
- 1.25 Life's Little Moments (s) (1737949)
- 2.00 Home and Away (Teletext) (s) (9695475)
- 2.25 Murder, She Wrote (s) (7968801)
- 3.20 News headlines (Teletext) (7729748)
- 3.25 Regional News (Teletext) (7728017)
- 3.30 Rosie and Jim (s) (7885399)
- 3.45 The Treasure People (s) (1165369)
- 3.55 Bimble's Bucket (Teletext) (s) (766314)
- 4.25 The Goats (Teletext) (s) (5796185)
- 4.50 Hong Kong (s) (1936814)
- 5.10 A Country Practice (s) (9694859)
- 5.40 News and weather (Teletext) (508340)
- 6.00 Home and Away (s) (Teletext) (s) (326746)
- 6.25 HTV News (Teletext) (410659)
- 6.50 Let's Go (Teletext) (823494)
- 7.00 Bruce Forsyth's Play Your Cards Right. Couples test their knowledge of public opinion. (Teletext) (s) (9982)
- 7.30 Coronation Street. Tricia is stringing out her work for Mike (Teletext) (949)



Stephen Beckett as Jarvis (8.00pm)

- 8.00 The Bill. Jarvis (Stephen Beckett) is taking the advanced driving test, but can he handle life in the fast lane? (Teletext) (8830)
- 8.30 Expert Witness. Crime reconstructions. Police raid the hideout of an animal liberation activist and a clue is found in a bag of sugar (Teletext) (s) (7765)
- 9.00 Soldier, Soldier. Major Radley's wife meets a face from her past (s) (Teletext) (s) (6746)
- 10.00 News and weather (Teletext) (80630)
- 10.30 HTV West Headlines (915632)
- 10.40 FILM: Mystery Date (1991). Black comedy starring Ethan Hawke, Teri Polo and Brian McNamara. Romance eludes a shy young man until his brother allows him to borrow his identity for an evening, complete with a beautiful date. Instead of a dream date the evening turns into a game of cat-and-mouse with both the police and cocaine hot on their heels. Directed by Jonathan Wacks (2164678)
- 12.35 Hotel Babylon (s) (6657586)
- 1.15 The Good Sex Guide... Late (s) (427654)
- 2.20 FILM: The Ann Jillian Story (1987) Ann Jillian plays herself in this biopic about the singer/actress who discovered she had cancer at the height of her career. Directed by Corey Allen (849925)
- 4.05 Not Fade Away (s) (s) (973530)
- 5.00 Best of British Motor Sport (s) (86050)
- 5.30 Morning News (71031)

SATellite and Cable

- Seamless Street (79388) 2.30 Try TCC (7778) 3.00 Eek the Cat (920) 3.30 Phil and Squirrel (4982) 4.00 California Dreams (3017) 4.30-5.00 Byler Grove (2501)
- 6.00am Dungeons and Dragons (83007)
- 6.30 Galaxy High School (53611) 7.00 Mr Men (47838) 7.30 Young and Rubicam (30136) 7.45 Rugrats (527017) 8.00 Doug (425388) 8.15 Asahi Real Mon (51162) 8.30 Ricki Lake (527017) 8.45 (1427) 9.00 Silver Meets from Mire (9253)
- 9.30 Pat Scoop (9272) 10.00 Bananas in Pyjamas (517748) 10.05 Bananas in Pyjamas (517748) 10.10 Bananas in Pyjamas (517748) 10.15 Bananas in Pyjamas (517748) 10.20 Bananas in Pyjamas (517748) 10.25 Bananas in Pyjamas (517748) 10.30 Bananas in Pyjamas (517748) 10.35 Bananas in Pyjamas (517748) 10.40 Bananas in Pyjamas (517748) 10.45 Bananas in Pyjamas (517748) 10.50 Bananas in Pyjamas (517748) 10.55 Bananas in Pyjamas (517748) 11.00 Bananas in Pyjamas (517748) 11.05 Bananas in Pyjamas (517748) 11.10 Bananas in Pyjamas (517748) 11.15 Bananas in Pyjamas (517748) 11.20 Bananas in Pyjamas (517748) 11.25 Bananas in Pyjamas (517748) 11.30 Bananas in Pyjamas (517748) 11.35 Bananas in Pyjamas (517748) 11.40 Bananas in Pyjamas (517748) 11.45 Bananas in Pyjamas (517748) 11.50 Bananas in Pyjamas (517748) 11.55 Bananas in Pyjamas (517748) 12.00 Bananas in Pyjamas (517748) 12.05 Bananas in Pyjamas (517748) 12.10 Bananas in Pyjamas (517748) 12.15 Bananas in Pyjamas (517748) 12.20 Bananas in Pyjamas 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Hole in one at 13th puts Masters champion back on course at The Oxfordshire

Faldo forced to play his ace

By JOHN HOPKINS
GOLF CORRESPONDENT

FEW golfers have the opportunity to have a lesson from Nick Faldo. Padraig Harrington has had two in five years. The second one came yesterday, in the Benson and Hedges International Open at The Oxfordshire, when, as one of Faldo's playing partners, Harrington was witness to a gritty 70 from the Masters champion. This round, two under par, included several demonstrations of why Faldo has won six major championship titles, as well as that rarity, a hole in one.

It was on the eve of the 1991 Walker Cup that Harrington, then a young and promising amateur, visited Faldo at Welwyn Garden City Golf Club. What he learnt then was theoretical. What Harrington, now a professional and the winner of the Spanish Open last week, learnt from Faldo yesterday, on a bitterly cold day when a north-easterly wind cut golfers to the quick, was practical — namely how to score well while not striking the ball perfectly and how to cope with conditions that were so difficult that one hole, the 17th, had every

FIRST ROUND

EARLY SCORES (GB and Ireland listed): 80 M A. Janner (Sp), 82 P. Beller (B. Lange), J. Van de Velde (Fr) 70: R. Harrington, N. Faldo 71: P. Lawrie, R. Chapman, I. Garrido (Sp), D. Cooper, M. Gales, S. Tomaz 72: G. Turner (NZ), G. Sherry, C. Montgomerie, M. Moulard, A. Sherborne, J. Haegeman (Swi), P. Atwood, F. George, P. McIntyre (Aus), J. Macdonald, W. Westner (SA), J. Spence, I. Woollam 73: G. Orr, W. Riley (Aus), A. Hunter, E. Darcy, R. Wessels (SA), R. Muntz (Hol), S. Cope, P. Broadhurst, D. Carter 74: P. Salas, J. Lomas, A. Lyle, M. Roe, P. Sjoland (Swi), B. Longmuir, L. Westwood, N. Briggs, A. Okonofor

score on it from a three to an 11.

Faldo is two strokes behind Miguel Angel Jimenez, the tournament leader, and one behind Peter Baker, Bernhard Langer, Howard Clark and Jean Van de Velde. Jimenez's 68 was one of the rounds of the year. The Spaniard with the doleful face, who has had two 63s this year, was up at 5.45 to be ready for his 7.30 starting time and, to protect himself against the cold, he wore four layers of clothing. He looked less silly than Faldo, who wore one of those odd-looking woolen hats with a bobble on the top. If it were silver and on a tea-time tray, you would lift the top and expect to find some hot crumpets beneath.

Nothing is quite as you would expect about Faldo and so the revelation that his seventh hole in one, at the 13th, was achieved with a seven-iron and that his previous six were all with six-irons was only to be expected. It was struck well, took two bounces and then disappeared quickly underground



Faldo plays his tee shot at the 2nd hole in the first round of the Benson and Hedges International Open at The Oxfordshire yesterday. Photograph: Ian Stewart

into one of the warmest places in this windswept part of the Oxfordshire countryside.

Equally, it is appropriate that just when everyone was saying how cold and bleak it was, it should be Faldo who revealed that he had played at this same course in June two years ago and been so cold that he and John Simpson, his manager, had walked in. "We put on layer after layer and gave up after 11 holes," Faldo said. "If you play for fun you don't want to stay out

there. Today was a survival day and tomorrow it's probably going to get worse. I hear rain is forecast."

There were several moments when Faldo's golf slipped from its usual high standards but there were as many when he reminded those who were brave enough to watch him precisely why he is so good. On the 5th, for example, he had to play from a grassy bank on the edge of a bunker with his feet above the ball. He made the chip

and six-foot putt that gave him a par look easy. While Harrington was playing steadily and safely and hitting more greens in regulation than his distinguished partner, it was Faldo who birdied the 9th with a seven-iron second shot that ended four feet from its target and birdied the 17th and 18th as well. The 17th, which had taken so many hostages in the course of the day, met its match in Faldo, who hit a two-iron second shot close enough to chip to two feet and get away with a

score on this hole that was seven strokes better than that of Grant Clough.

Harrington's stance, swing and his putting style look unconventional. Before he commences his backswing there is a distinct sideways movement of his head to the right. Then there is a pause at the top of the backswing. He puts with his left hand below his right and the toe of his putter raised well up off the ground.

"He's OK," Faldo said of Har-

ington, very much the sorcerer's apprentice, who had a 75, thanks, largely, to dropping two strokes on both the 10th and the 15th. "He swings well and has the right idea," Faldo added. "He is off to a good start."

In time, Harrington will learn how to manufacture a decent score when aspects of his game are not functioning at their best. That is what Faldo did yesterday and that is why he finished five strokes ahead of the young Irishman.

Resurgent McLaren
pour on
the powerFROM OLIVER HOIT
IN MONACO

THE Monagasques are not famed for their sentimentality but they might have allowed themselves a wry smile after yesterday's opening practice sessions for the Monaco Grand Prix here on Sunday. Michael Schumacher, who has just deserted the principal prize for a new home in Geneva, was languishing in eleventh place in the list of times, while Mika Hakkinen and David Coulthard, still proud residents, were first and third respectively.

The times in the first two sessions are notoriously unreliable indicators of performance in the race because some teams try to set fast times, others settle for preparing their cars for the race. But the performances of Hakkinen and Coulthard are still indicative of a resurgence at McLaren. So low had their fortunes sunk, in fact, it could almost be said to be a resurrection.

After a perilous opening to the season, Coulthard recovered to such an extent that he led the San Marino Grand Prix at Imola a fortnight ago for more than 20 laps. This race marks the 30th anniversary of the establishment of the team and once again, "victory" is seeping back into their vocabulary.

"It was a very encouraging first day," Coulthard said. "It is encouraging to be where we would expect to be in the development of the car. Saturday is when it really matters but this gives us the confidence to do good research for that day."

Today is a rest day before the drivers battle for pole position in tomorrow's sole qualifying session. The race should still be dominated by Damon Hill, in his Williams-Renault, who was second yesterday, and Schumacher. Hakkinen is a good outside bet.

Driven to distraction, page 3



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Tomorrow in The Times:
a 12-page guide to the
Euro 96 Interactive Team
Football game

Venables takes rearguard action

By ANDREW LONGMORE

ASTON VILLA, whose defence was one of the meanest in the FA Cup Premier League last season, could provide the England football championship next month. Upo Ebiogu, the strong and impressive centre-back, was yesterday called up for the England tour of the Far East, joining Gareth Southgate, his club colleague, in the 27-man squad and virtually ending the hopes of Gary Pallister and Steve Howey of appearing in the tournament. Both were left out yesterday because of doubts about their fitness.

Pallister helped to guide Manchester United to the double at Wembley last Saturday, but is restricted to playing once a week by a persistent back injury, which is of little use in the concentrated schedule of Euro 96. Howey, whose solidity and intelligence were sorely missed by Newcastle United in the final weeks of

the title chase, has still not fully recovered from his hamstring injury. He is away in Cyprus with Newcastle and is in constant touch with Terry Venables, the England coach, on the telephone, but his chances of making the final squad are fading by the day.

Clearly, Venables is anxious that his defence is looking a little threadbare, which makes the presence of Adams — out of competitive action since January — increasingly critical. Venables now has to decide whether to risk the Arsenal defender against Hungary tomorrow, on the grounds that he needs as much match practice as he can get before the opening game against Switzerland on June 8, or to rest him for a further week for fear of testing his injured knee too soon. Adams has been impressive in training this week and the odds are on an immediate return.

Venables, in contrast to other national managers, will leave it to the last minute to

ENGLAND PARTY

v China, Thursday May 23, and Hong Kong, Friday May 25

D. Seaman (Arsenal), T. Flowers (Blackburn Rovers), I. Walker (Tottenham Hotspur), G. Noville (Manchester United), S. Pearce (Nottingham Forest), P. Neville (Manchester United), A. Adams (Arsenal), M. Wright (Liverpool), G. Southgate (Aston Villa), U. Ebiogu (Aston Villa), S. Campbell (Tottenham Hotspur), P. Gascoigne (Rangers), P. Ince (Ipswich Town), D. Platt (Arsenal), R. Lee (Newcastle United), D. Wise (Chelsea), J. Redknapp (Liverpool), S. McManis (Liverpool), J. Whitlock (Blackburn Rovers), G. Anderton (Tottenham Hotspur), S. Stone (Nottingham Forest), E. Sheringham (Tottenham Hotspur), A. Shearer (Blackburn Rovers), I. Ferdinand (Newcastle United), R. Fowler (Liverpool), N. Barmby (Middlesbrough), P. Boulden (Newcastle United).

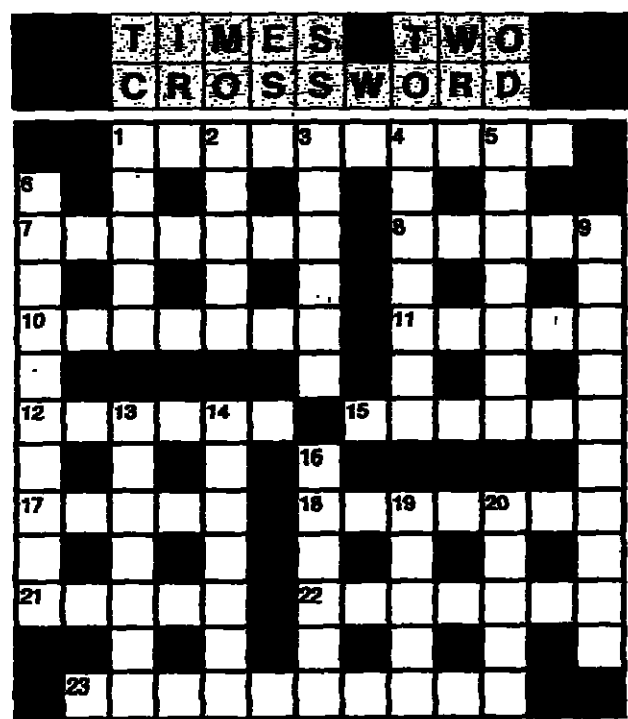
prune his squad from 27 to the final 22. "I don't want to be searching for players because I've had some injuries," he said.

One of those for whom an outing at the Workers Stadium in Beijing next Thursday could prove a last advertisement for inclusion is Nick Barmby, who might reflect during visits to the Great Wall

and the Forbidden City that, however sedate the pace of life in the East, an international career in the West moves with bewildering speed.

Last autumn, Barmby was being acclaimed for a highly polished full international debut against Colombia and his club, Middlesbrough, was proving the surprise package of the season. Come the spring and Barmby's confidence had dropped as swiftly as Middlesbrough's League placing and his international position had been snapped up by Teddy Sheringham.

Venables is expecting the match against China to be as tough as any England might have in the tournament itself, although he conceded the encounter with Hong Kong, three days later, would be more gentle. "It's very important that we learn about these parts of the world," he said. "Korea, Japan, China: these are going to be the next powers in the game." No one can accuse him of myopia.



No 784

ACROSS

- 1 Secret weakness (4,2,4)
- 7 Romanov supporter (7)
- 8 Fissure, rift (5)
- 10 Official journal (7)
- 11 (Thieves) slang: sounds like Jason's ship (5)
- 12 Scarf (tucked into shirt) (6)
- 15 To place; to rest (6)
- 17 Quivering tree (5)
- 18 Six-legged, three-segment creatures (7)
- 21 White-haired; old (5)
- 22 Confused agitation (7)
- 23 (Law) no longer enforced (4,6)

DOWN

- 1 Liszt, Kafka (5)
- 2 George..., (woman) novelist (5)
- 3 The beginning (6)
- 4 Waterfall (7)
- 5 Briskly (mus.) (7)
- 6 Old inter-city horse-drawn transport (10)
- 9 Horse-blanket pattern of bright checks (10)
- 13 Mollify (7)
- 14 Riled (7)
- 16 Walk quietly (eg through tulips) (6)
- 19 Walk proudly (5)
- 20 Singing group (5)

The solution to 783 will be published Wednesday, May 22

We are now offering readers of The Times FREE delivery of the items listed below at standard retail price — offer extended to include Europe — rest of World add £1 per item — sterling or US\$ cheques only — (US\$ 1.25)

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